



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jacob Ashby

## ASHBY, LOCAL LEADERS URGE LEGISLATIVE ACTION ON RETAIL CRIME

JAKE ASHBY February 5, 2024



State Senator Jake Ashby

Sen. Jake Ashby (R,C-Castleton) today joined with Capital Region Chamber President and CEO Mark Eagan, Colonie Center General Manager Jeff Law, Albany County Sheriff Craig Apple and local elected officials to promote state legislative action to combat the rise of retail crime at a news conference at Colonie Center.

Ashby and Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara sponsor a bipartisan bill (S.7599) that would increase criminal penalties against repeat shoplifters.

“My bills represent concrete actions we can take as a Legislature to immediately respond to this crisis directly. Absent the threat of jail time or the possibility of being held until their trial, sophisticated criminals are victimizing our retailers with impunity. When retailers are forced to lock up their products because our society can’t lock up serial offenders, it should be obvious that something is very wrong. I’m grateful for Assemblyman Santabarbara’s efforts in the Assembly to push our bill, and I’m urging all our colleagues to help us get this done,” said Ashby.

"This bipartisan legislation takes a stand against repeat shoplifting, holding offenders accountable and emphasizing our dedication to preventing large-scale theft," said Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara, sponsor of Assembly Bill No. 7882. "It aims to safeguard businesses, create a safer retail environment and ensure fair prices for law-abiding families, who often bear the brunt of increased costs due to criminal activity. By comprehensively addressing this issue, the bill reflects a commitment to no longer tolerate such unacceptable behavior."

Ashby also sponsors legislation (S.5973) which would restore judicial discretion to the pretrial process and allow jurists to remand dangerous, repeat offenders after their arraignments and prevent them from immediately reoffending.

“We call upon the legislature to take action to address the drastic increase in retail crime that is raising costs for paying customers,” said Mark Eagan, president and CEO of the Capital Region Chamber.

"Small business owners and everyday New Yorkers have been victimized by rising retail theft and other crime across our state the last several years. It's clear that bail reform and other misguided criminal justice policies are a main culprit behind this crime spike. I thank Senator Ashby for bringing together members of law enforcement, the business community and other local partners to tackle this problem head-on. Protecting public safety and quality of life are our first responsibilities as elected leaders," said Albany County Legislature Minority Leader Frank Mauriello.

"Retail theft is costing consumers billions of dollars and encouraging merchants to close brick and mortar establishments; Senator Ashby's efforts will save us money and ensure the continued convenience of local retail establishments," said Albany County Legislator Paul Burgdorf.

"Pick up the Colonie Spotlight and read the weekly Police Blotter. The majority are repeat offenders with warrants for missing their previous court date. There is no incentive for them to show up and they are free to commit more crimes. Something needs to be done to slow them down," said Colonie Town Board Member Jeff Madden.

"The Town of Colonie has always been a leading hub of small business growth and shopping in the Capital Region. Today, our community's character is under threat by increased shoplifting and retail crime, decreased safety for retail employees and consumers, and an overall state criminal justice system that puts lawbreakers before law-abiding citizens. I want to thank Senator Ashby and local leaders for working with police and business owners to address this serious problem. As a mother of four and wife to a Colonie Police Officer, there is nothing more important to me than keeping our neighborhoods safe," said Colonie Town Board Member Kristen Blais.

Ashby found the proposals the governor outlined in her state of the state address to be incomplete. Hochul proposed tax credits for businesses to enhance their own security and a \$40 million State Police Task Force.

“Every small business in the state already pays taxes that should be funding a fair, effective criminal justice system that protects its people and deters criminals. I will always be for providing the New York State Police with the resources they need to do their jobs, but I think it’s worth considering that it doesn’t cost a dime to fix these laws, empower our police officers and tilt the balance away from career criminals and back toward our law-abiding constituents. We don’t need to wait for the budget. We can get this done now,” said Ashby.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2023-S7599**

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- Introduced
  
- ○ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
  
- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
  
- ○ Passed Assembly

- Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Relates to grand larceny in the fourth degree

July 12, 2023

In Senate Committee [Codes](#)

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Do you support this bill?