



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Sen. Schneiderman And Assm. Schimel Lead Effort To Help Solve Gun Crimes

ERIC T. SCHNEIDERMAN April 28, 2009

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Bill Has Widespread Support From Law Enforcement Community

ALBANY – In an effort to help law enforcement solve gun crimes, Senator Eric Schneiderman (D-Manhattan/Bronx) and Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel (D-Great Neck) are leading the fight in the New York State Legislature on microstamping legislation. Microstamping technology is designed to aid law enforcement in investigating and solving homicides and other gun-related crimes.

Microstamping ensures that when a gun is fired, information identifying the make, model and serial number of the gun is stamped onto the cartridge as numbers and letters. This technology allows law enforcement officials to trace firearms through cartridge casings found at crime scenes, even if the crime gun is never found. This crime-fighting tool provides law enforcement with rapid leads at crime scenes and will provide evidence to help investigate, arrest, and convict the perpetrators of gun-related crimes.

"Law enforcement officers need as many tools as possible to solve gun crimes and to prevent the trafficking of illegal guns often used in crimes. Microstamping is just such a tool. The

Senate owes it to the public and to our law enforcement officers to enact legislation that ensures that this tool is available here in New York," said Senator Eric Schneiderman.

Assemblywoman Schimel's microstamping bill (A.6468), which has widespread support among law enforcement agencies and anti-gun violence groups, passed the New York State Assembly on Tuesday. The bill requires all semiautomatic pistols manufactured or delivered to any licensed firearms dealer in the State of New York to be capable of microstamping ammunition by January 1, 2011.

Senator Schneiderman is the bill's sponsor in the Senate.

"No shooter has the right to hide behind a blank shell casing. When a person is murdered or victimized with a firearm we want to know who fired that gun," said Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, a board member of New Yorkers Against Gun Violence since 1994.

This legislation (S.4397/A.6468) will not place any restrictions on gun ownership or access, will not require any new databases, and will not impose any new costs on the state. Manufacturers will incur minimal costs to adopt this technology.

Todd Lizotte, the co-inventor of microstamping technology has said that he will offer this technology royalty-free to any manufacturer making guns for the United States domestic market because he believes that it is an important tool for law enforcement.

According to Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen Rice, "Microstamping is another 'common sense' tool law enforcement can use to keep our community safe. Like fingerprinting and DNA testing, microstamping is a technological advancement that will strengthen prosecutions of the guilty and help exonerate the innocent. We need this

legislation. I applaud Assemblywoman Schimel and Senator Schneiderman in their efforts to improve public safety and draft laws that will make our communities safer places."

Sobering statistics from the FBI indicate that nearly 40 percent of all homicides go unsolved each year in the United States. In 2005, there were over 3,000 unsolved gun-related homicides nationwide. In the future, New York could see a higher percentage of closed cases if investigators can identify crime guns solely from cartridge cases collected at crime scenes.

"Police investigators work hard to catch the perpetrators who prey on our communities, prosecutors work hard to build cases against these criminals, and victims of gun violence and their families deserve some degree of justice for the heinous crimes they have endured. It is unacceptable not to embrace this effective law enforcement tool," added Assemblywoman Schimel.

Assemblywoman Schimel and Senator Schneiderman have the support of more than 90 law enforcement agencies and elected officials, including those from communities most impacted by gun violence, such as Rochester, Syracuse, Albany, Schenectady and Hempstead.