



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dale M. Volker

Rockefeller Drug Reform Allows Criminals to Teach Our Children

DALE M. VOLKER May 26, 2009

New York City Democratic Bill Allows Drug Addicts to Perform Sensitive Jobs!

(ALBANY, NY) Today, Senator Dale M. Volker, voiced outrage pertaining to the recently enacted “Rockefeller Drug Reform” bill that was passed by the Democratic Leadership in the State Senate, State Assembly and Governor’s Office, which allows for convicted drug addicts to get sensitive jobs working with children and senior citizens. The law, which goes into effect within two weeks, would significantly rollback penalties for drug crimes and courts will now begin sealing the records of certain drug criminals, which would prevent employers from getting important background information as part of the hiring process.

“Unfortunately, the possibility of a drug addict having the ability to circumvent normal hiring practices with more protections than law-abiding New Yorkers, is something that we should all be concerned with,” said Senator Dale M. Volker. “This feel-good legislation will now allow drug addicts to apply to be teachers, doctors, foster parents, child-care workers, nursing home aides, and firefighters, since their backgrounds will now be sealed from their potential employer. It’s simply scary that New York State is allowing this extremely dangerous policy to take place.”

New York State Law requires criminal background checks for certain professions, and in many cases, prohibits hiring or issuing licenses to people with certain felonies on their records. However, with the new “Rockefeller Drug Reform” trumpeted by Governor Paterson and Democratic leaders in the State Senate and State Assembly, the law will provide judges with the discretion to seal the records of as many as four non-violent crimes—a felony and three misdemeanors-when the convict completes drug treatment. This would prevent school districts, hospitals, and nursing homes for example, from knowing whether the person they just hired had, or continues to have, a drug problem and puts our seniors and our children at

risk.

“The background check mandate for certain jobs was done for a reason,” said Senator Volker. “It’s there to ensure that law breakers were not going into sensitive jobs that deal with our children and senior citizens. Now, the democratic law would allow drug dealers, car thieves, and

those who are convicted of breaking and entering, to be potentially employed as a kindergarten teacher, a nanny, or a firefighter. It’s simply wrong and fraught with danger to our loved ones.”