



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Senator Young Sponsors Bill to Repeal New Laws Giving Drug Dealers Greater Protections

CATHARINE YOUNG May 27, 2009

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ALBANY - Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) today announced she is co-sponsoring a bill that would fix a dangerous problem created by changes to the state's drug laws enacted as part of the 2009-10 state budget.

Under the budget measure, which takes effect on June 8th, courts may seal the criminal records of certain drug felons when they complete drug court, so there will be no record of their conviction when they apply for employment.

“Cocaine dealers or crackheads could end up teaching your child at school, caring for your toddler at daycare, or attending to you sick grandmother in the nursing home as a result of this shocking new law that hides the past of criminals,” said Sen. Young. “The bill I am sponsoring would repeal this outrageous law so families can know for sure who they are entrusting their loved ones to before tragedy occurs.”

Senator Young said her bill would repeal the new record-sealing provision enacted with the budget, that allows the courts to seal the current felony conviction and up to three prior misdemeanors in order to keep them from being disclosed during background checks for sensitive positions. If this law is left on the books, a criminal could have a total of four

convictions hidden from potential employers.

“We have consistently enacted laws in the state requiring criminal background checks to protect the safety of the public by ensuring that people hired to work in certain jobs have no record of criminal convictions and are worthy of people’s trust,” said Sen. Young. “The new record sealing provision undermines these laws.”

“Also ignored was the near unanimous opposition of our State’s District Attorneys, who certainly know more about this issue and its potential negative effects than Albany politicians,” said Sen. Young. “In the end, the three New York City Democrat leaders have capped off a budget that is a fiscal disaster, with a reform agenda that coddles felons and expands the rights of criminals, while turning their backs on our law enforcement experts and ultimately on the law abiding citizens of this state that count on us to protect them.”

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