



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

## Senator Nozzolio Calls for Stronger Parole Laws

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO June 9, 2010

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State Senator Mike Nozzolio strongly denounced the New York State Parole Board for a number of shocking incidents in which violent criminals were released back on the streets and committed horrific crimes, including murder. Senator Nozzolio criticized the Board for protecting the rights of dangerous criminals over the rights of law-abiding citizens and called for stronger parole laws in New York State.

“Over the last year, we have seen the shocking degeneration of New York State’s criminal justice system by the New York City legislators who now control every level of our State’s government,” said Senator Nozzolio. “These legislators are more concerned with releasing criminals from our prisons than they are in protecting our streets, neighborhoods and schoolyards. Their decisions have sadly resulted in tragedy.”

Senator Nozzolio singled out the murders of Helen Buchel and her daughter Brittany Passalacqua in Geneva last November as an example of how the early parole of a dangerous criminal led to such a tragedy. John Edward Brown, their accused murderer, had been released from prison after serving only 2 ½ years of a 3 year sentence for violently assaulting his infant daughter in 2003.

“It is unconscionable that these horrific crimes could have been prevented if the New York State Parole Board had taken a harder stance on crime and against individuals who commit violent and horrific crimes against society. Clearly the New York City driven agenda to release criminals into our streets has failed,” said Senator Nozzolio.

Earlier this year, the Division of Parole instituted a dangerous new policy which allows violent offenders, criminals out on parole, to remain free even if they fail a drug test or commit other illegal actions which violate the terms of their parole. In addition, Governor Paterson recently proposed a series of measures to make it easier for inmates to be released on parole by claiming they have a debilitating, but not life threatening illness.

Last year, the New York City legislators who now control the budget process negotiated in secret and pushed through legislation that severely weakened New York State's drug laws by allowing drug offenders with as many as four or five prior convictions to be released to community-based treatment programs instead of being put into jail. As a part of these

changes, individual judges can now decide to seal the records of a convicted drug dealer or criminal, including those with up to three prior misdemeanor convictions. These same individuals can then apply for jobs at schools, day care facilities, and nursing homes. Prospective employers are prevented from knowing anything about their prior criminal backgrounds!

“Under these new liberal policies, New York’s parole system has been severely compromised and there has been an all-out assault on the tough criminal justice laws that we fought so hard to enact,” said Senator Nozzolio.

Senator Nozzolio, who has long championed more severe punishment for violent felons, is supporting a number of measures to toughen New York’s parole system, including:

- €€ Requiring a unanimous vote for parole to be granted to class A violent offenders;
- €€ Requiring the Division of Parole to maintain a listing of inmates and eligibility dates, along with other relevant data, on their website;
- €€ Requiring that all parole board members to hear testimony from crime victims and their families;
- €€ Mandating an extensive array of information about inmates be made available on the State Division of Parole website, including their record of behavior while incarcerated;
- €€ Requiring victims to be notified of upcoming parole hearings; and
- €€ Requiring the sentence of life in prison without parole for persistent violent offenders.

“New York’s most violent criminals must not be released back into our communities where they can once again threaten the lives and safety of innocent people,” concluded Senator Nozzolio. “By releasing these dangerous criminals, the Parole Board is placing every single New Yorker at risk.”

To watch further remarks from Senator Nozzolio on the New York State Parole Board, please click [here](#).

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