



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

## Senate Acts to Prevent Prostitution Near Schools

RUBEN DIAZ May 11, 2011

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Bill Creates Felony Charges for Patronizing or Promoting Prostitution Within 1,000 Feet of School Grounds

The New York State Senate today passed legislation to protect the welfare of children by creating new crimes of promoting or patronizing prostitution near school grounds. The bill (S.1313A) would make schools safer by enabling law enforcement to charge anyone involved in the sex trade and acting within 1,000 feet of school grounds with a class E felony.

Recent news articles have highlighted issues with prostitution near the West Farms Elementary School in the Bronx. Students, parents and teachers have had to routinely encounter prostitution outside the school, including a tent used for sex with prostitutes that is visible to students because of its proximity to the playground. School staff have also had to take extensive measures to rid the school grounds of condoms and hypodermic needles.

“This measure reinforces the importance of keeping schools as havens from drugs, violence, and other illegal activities that would have a negative impact on a child’s healthy upbringing,” Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos said. “There is a need for us to act to prevent children and teachers from being subjected to prostitution on and near school grounds so that a school’s focus can remain on the education and well-being of students.”

“As parents, concerned citizens and legislators, we must do everything in our power to protect our children and provide them with the safest environment possible in which to learn,” Senator Ruben Diaz (D-Bronx), the bill’s sponsor, said. “I am grateful to my colleagues in the Senate for their support of this important bill and I also want to thank Majority Leader Skelos for the personal commitment and support he showed in moving this bill through the legislative process which culminated in today’s vote. I now call on Speaker Sheldon Silver to do the right thing by our children and pass this bill.”

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.