



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Hugh T. Farley

Senate Passes Brittany' Law, Creates Statewide Violent Felony Offender Registry

HUGH T. FARLEY May 19, 2011

| ISSUE: **CRIME**

State Senator Hugh T. Farley (R, C, I - Schenectady) announced that he and his colleagues in the New York State Senate passed Brittany's Law (S.3645B) on May 17th, a bill that would establish a statewide violent felony offender registry by requiring offenders to register with the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services upon release from prison. The law is intended to increase the safety of all New Yorkers by providing access to the list of convicted violent offenders.

Brittany's Law is named for 12 year-old Brittany Passalacqua, who was murdered in Geneva, N.Y., in 2009 along with her mother Helen Buchel by a violent convicted felon who had been released from prison. The killer, John Edward Brown, was on parole at the time of the murder. He was released from prison after serving 2 ½ years of a three-year sentence for assaulting his infant daughter in 2003.

Passalacqua's grandmother Dale Driscoll, has been leading the fight to establish a violent felony offender registry in honor of her granddaughter.

The violent felony offender registry would be similar to the New York State Sex Offender Registry. Offenders would be required to register once released from prison and must re-register annually. Information about the offenders would be compiled in the database. Other states have established a violent felony offender registry, including Montana, Illinois, Indiana, Florida, Kansas, Louisiana, Nevada, and Oklahoma.

A recent study by the University of Wyoming found that individuals under the age of 25 who commit violent crimes have the highest rate of recidivism. The Urban Institute Justice Policy Center based in Washington, DC, conducted a study published in 2003 that found nationwide 53% of arrested males and 39% of arrested females are re-incarcerated.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.