



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shirley L. Huntley

## Keeping Schools Safe from Illegal Activity

SHIRLEY L. HUNTLEY May 11, 2011

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**News From New York State**

**Senator Shirley L. Huntley**

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### **Senate Enhances Law Aimed at Punishing Prostitution Offenses Near School Grounds**

Senator Huntley (D-Jamaica) announced that the New York State Senate passed legislation, S. 1313-A, which establishes new crimes and increased penalties for promoting and conducting prostitution within one thousand feet of school grounds.

“We, as a community must ensure that these types of crimes do not occur near school grounds,” said Senator Huntley. “Prostitution is not only dangerous to the participants, but brings unsafe elements into our communities which impressionable and vulnerable school aged children should not have to bear witness to.”

This legislation:

- States that anyone who knowingly advances or profits from the crime by managing, supervising, controlling or owning a prostitution business located within one thousand feet of school grounds is guilty of a class C felony.

- Criminalizes the promotion of prostitution within one thousand feet of school grounds as a class E felony.
- Makes patronizing a prostitute within one thousand feet of school grounds a class E felony.

This law stems from a January 2011 New York Times article entitled "A Bronx Elementary School, Surrounded by Prostitutes." The article revealed that students attending the West Farms Elementary School are unwillingly subjected to witnessing daily acts of prostitution. The brazen activity ranged from prostitutes roaming the streets around the school to performing illicit acts in a tent at the base of the school's playground.

This legislation will be beneficial to residents who live in certain areas of Queens whose children may be subjected to this type of criminal behavior. The recruitment of children to engage or in some cases be forced into prostitution negatively impacts families and communities.

Throughout the borough of Queens and the rest of New York City, schools provide children a safe learning environment, free from corrosive and criminal activity. It is imperative that our children have as many safe havens as possible and ensuring prostitution offenses do not occur near a school will help immensely.

The senator concluded, "this bill goes considerably further than current law so that law enforcement may effectively prevent and punish prostitution crimes. The penalties for those who exploit women and force victims into prostitution are much harsher. This is an unfortunate but necessary precaution to protect our children and ensure their educational environment is safe and secure."

Additional news available at <http://huntley.nysenate.gov> and [facebook.com/Shirley L.](https://www.facebook.com/Shirley.L.Huntley)

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