



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo-Sponsored Harsher Penalty Bill For Child Sex-Abusers Signed Into Law

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO May 23, 2011

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### **Griffo-Sponsored Harsher Penalty Bill For Child Sex-Abusers Signed Into Law**

(Utica) – State Senator Joseph A. Griffo (R-IP-C, Rome) reported that the Governor Cuomo has signed legislation into law to strengthen the penalties for those adults who are convicted of the sexual abuse of a child.

Senator Griffo is the prime sponsor of Senate bill 1882 which amends current criminal provisions to allow for a person to be found guilty of sexual abuse in the 1<sup>st</sup> degree when the abuser is at least twenty-one years old and the victim is less than thirteen years old.

“The sexual exploitation and abuse of children doesn’t recognize borders, and continues to cross state lines and cover all jurisdictions, but if you examine the criminal consequences for some abusers and rapists, it doesn’t fit the crime,” said Senator Griffo. “New York will be joining just a handful of states that recognize that an adult subjecting a child to sexual contact should be considered a violent act and not just a minor felony offense. I’m pleased that it finally passed both houses this year and we’ll be able distinguish

that sexual abuse of children isn't a crime on the same level as shoplifting."

Griffo also credited the sponsor of the Assembly companion version, Former Assemblymember and current Office of General Services Commissioner, RoAnn Destito. "This law would not have been possible without the dedication and perseverance of several people. The first one is RoAnn Destito. In a legislative career filled with exemplary accomplishments, she told me that this law holds a special place for her. I'm proud to have partnered with RoAnn and we are all grateful that she worked as hard as she did, because when it came to protecting children, no one cared more than her."

Griffo also recognized others who were instrumental. "Special recognition needs to be given to Executive Assistant District Attorney Dawn Lupi of the Oneida County District Attorney's office and former Executive Director of the Child Advocacy Center – and current County Emergency Services Director, Kevin Revere," Griffo added. "These two were on the front lines and saw firsthand, the devastating and everlasting consequences of child sex abuse. They helped advocate and spoke with one voice on behalf of the victims."