



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Gallivan, Senate Pass Expansion of Dna Databank

PATRICK M. GALLIVAN June 17, 2011

| ISSUE: **CRIME**



All Criminal Convictions Would Require Submission of DNA Sample

Senator Patrick M. Gallivan announced yesterday that State Senate has taken another definitive step towards making our communities safer, passing legislation (S.5560) that significantly expands the ability of law enforcement to solve crimes by requiring those convicted of all felonies and misdemeanors to submit DNA samples.

The bill would greatly enhance the DNA database, protecting communities by keeping more criminals off the streets, while also reducing the financial costs and victims' emotional strain by solving crimes more expeditiously.

Senator Gallivan, a career law enforcement professional and former two-term Sheriff of Erie County, applauded the measure. "I can attest first hand that for too long the playing field has been tipped in the criminals' favor. To keep our communities safe, we must continue to equip law enforcement with the tools needed to combat career criminals."

Since its creation in 1996, New York State's DNA databank has transformed criminal investigations and prosecutions to make them more accurate and effective, as well as helped to exonerate the innocent. However, current law does not mandate the collection of DNA from all those convicted of crimes, including many misdemeanor offenses. This impedes law enforcement's ability to resolve investigations as quickly and enabled some criminals to remain free to commit more crimes, sometimes with devastating consequences.

"Criminals and crimes are always evolving; our means to investigate and prosecute must evolve with them. New York's current databank has proved effective in identifying criminals, aiding convictions, and protecting the public," said Gallivan. "DNA is the 21st century's equivalent to fingerprinting, the time has come to maximize its potential. Acting on this crucial legislation will make New York a safer place and protect lives."

District attorneys from across the state were in Albany this week to lend their support to the measure. The legislation has been sent to the assembly.

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