



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dean G. Skelos

## Senate Passes Bill to Increase Penalties for Stalking

DEAN G. SKELOS February 13, 2012

The New York State Senate today passed a bill, sponsored by Senator Carl L. Marcellino, that would increase the penalties for stalking (S. 924A). An estimated 3.4 million people are victims of stalking in the United States each year.

"The obsessive nature of stalkers is unimaginable until you have suffered as the target of their endless pursuit," said Senator Marcellino. "Stalking is a serious and potentially life-threatening crime. It changes the lives of the people who are victimized forever. This heinous behavior often proves lethal and the punishment must fit the crime."

"Being stalked instills tremendous fear in victims, and often, stalking can result in violence toward the victims," said Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos. "This bill will increase the penalties for stalking and will bring a greater measure of protection for victims."

This legislation would change stalking in the fourth degree to a class A misdemeanor from a class B misdemeanor; third degree stalking will become a class E felony from a class A misdemeanor; second degree stalking will become a class D felony from a class E felony; stalking in the first degree will become a class C felony from a class D felony.

Stalking describes specific repeated, unwanted harassing or threatening behavior toward another person; the stalker can be a stranger, but statistics show that most stalkers know

their victims and can be a partner, an ex-partner, a family member, or a co-worker.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.