



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Legislation to Update Sex Offenders Photos to Go to Governor

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO June 19, 2012

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Griffo: Senate Passes Bill To Ensure Updates of Sex Offender ID Mugshots

(Albany) - State Senator Joseph A. Griffo (R-C-IP, Rome) today said that the Senate has passed Bill S.7569 that will require the up to date photographs of sex offenders subsequent to release. This bill will ensure that photographs for level three sex offenders or sexual predators are updated and are an accurate representation of their most current physical appearances.

"The former system for updating photos was unacceptable when you look at how important it is that we continue to protect society. Based on the incident that transpired in Utica, the Blainey case, there was urgency to act, and I am pleased that we have acted to amend the current law to require more updated photos to ensure that when somebody is out there on parole and there is any violation of that parole, that we will have an easier way to identify that individual," said Sen. Griffo, who noted that a similar bill cleared the Assembly and will be going back to the other house for changes to conform with the Senate version.

The bill memo notes the local significance of the legislation. Although current rules require a picture annually, the file photo in the Robert Blainey case bore no resemblance to the actual suspect after he broke his parole. During a time in which a woman was murdered and police

were conducting a manhunt for Blainey, police were given a mugshot photo of Blainey to help look for him. However, the photo was outdated and pictured Blainey with a shaved head and glasses, while unbeknownst to the public he had grown out his hair and a facial goatee.

“What we saw in the Utica area was a failure in the system; what we have here is a correction to close that loophole,” Griffo said. This legislation ensures that photographs of level three sex offenders or sexual predators are up-to-date. Such offenders are required to personally appear to law enforcement every 90 days to verify their address. If a new photograph is taken at the 90 day appearance, the law enforcement agency shall promptly forward a copy of such photograph to the division of criminal justice services.

“I made a promise to the people of Oneida County that we would take the swiftest possible action to change the system, and with this legislation we are doing that. I do not want any community anywhere in this state to be gripped by the kind of fear that gripped Oneida County because of gaping holes in existing policies. This legislation is common sense, and protects the people who look to us to protect them from predatory, violent offenders,” Griffo said.

S.7569 has a companion version in the Assembly sponsored by Assemblymember Anthony Brindisi. The bill will next go to the Governor for his consideration into law.