



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Senator Ritchie Hails Signing of New 'Cyberbullying' Law

PATTY RITCHIE July 9, 2012

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### **Will Help Protect Safety of Teens Targeted by Online and Neighborhood Bullies**

Senator Patty Ritchie today hailed the signing of New York's new "cyberbullying" law, saying it will help protect teenagers online and on the street from a growing epidemic of intimidation and menacing behavior by bullies.

"Bullying on the streets and, increasingly, online, does more than just hurt a young person's feelings," said Senator Ritchie. "The damage is real, and can include lower student achievement, increased substance abuse, and even has been linked to a rise in teen suicides."

"This new law will ensure a rapid response to cases of bullying before they spin out of control, and gives victims protection from bullies, so they can concentrate on school, learning and growing up in a safe and nurturing environment."

Governor Cuomo Monday signed the bill, which passed unanimously in both the Senate and Assembly last month.

Under the new law, which takes effect July 1, 2013, schools will work with parents and law enforcement to respond forcefully when bullying occurs by:

- Adding bullying to the list of incidents for which disciplinary measures must be taken;
- Requiring school employees to report incidents of bullying, and
- Requiring school districts to create policies and guidelines to encourage awareness of and to prohibit acts of bullying.

Recent surveys show an alarming increase in cases of bullying and online bullying, with more than 7 million US teens reported that they have been victims.

Senator Ritchie is doing her part to respond to the growing cyberbullying trend, meeting with school officials and law enforcement, and hosting an online Q-and-A with Miss New York, Kaitlin Monte, fielding questions from constituents about the growing problem of schoolyard bullying.

[Find a fact sheet on the new cyberbullying law by clicking here.](#)