



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

## Squadron, Community and Elected Officials, Advocates Urge Albany Special Session on Gun Violence

DANIEL L. SQUADRON October 5, 2012

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**After Bloodshed Around NYC, Squadron and Advocates Call on Albany to Pass Critical Gun Control Bills, at Site of Recent Shooting**

### **Squadron: Time to Act to Save Lives**

NEW YORK – Today, State Senator Daniel Squadron joined community and elected officials and advocates to urge a special legislative session in Albany to address the crisis of gun violence in New York City and around the state.

This year, 1,329 people have been injured or killed by guns in New York City alone. Early Monday morning, a young man was shot in the leg on the grounds of Campos Plaza; the perpetrator has not been indentified and remains on the loose.

At the site of the recent shooting at Campos Plaza, Squadron and the coalition called on legislators to immediately return to Albany to vote on a package of gun control bills that would make New York 's gun laws the strongest in the country. Among the bills are Squadron-Rosenthal legislation to broaden the definition of "assault weapon" to include a number of military-style guns, legislation to ensure the microstamping of shell casings, a bill to limit the number of guns an individual can purchase to one-per-month, and measures to close loopholes in background checks.

As discussions continue about a possible special legislative session on a number of issues, including a pay raise for legislators, Squadron has been urging focus on these critical gun control measures.

"Before one more innocent life is lost, it's time for the legislature to pass these critical bills," said **Senator Daniel Squadron**. "From the crime-solving tool of microstamping to my bill to crack down on assault weapons, these common sense measures would be a big step toward protecting New York's families. Yet again and again the gun lobby keeps these guns on our streets and our communities at risk -- and we too often see the consequences right here at home. Thank you to all of my colleagues working to end the scourge of gun violence."

"New Yorkers Against Gun Violence applauds the work of Senator Squadron and his colleagues in New York who are working hard to pass sensible gun legislation. We cannot continue to allow our children to die in playgrounds and mothers to die on the street. For too long important legislation has been forced to the back burner. Now is the time to pass common sense measures to help protect families and communities in New York," said **Jackie**

**Hilly, Executive Director of New Yorkers Against Gun Violence.**

“Gun violence remains a tragic epidemic nationally and, right here, in New York City. We must pursue strategies at all levels of government – federal, state and local – that get these weapons off the street and make our communities safer,” said **Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez**.

**Senator Michael Gianaris** said, “We should immediately act to keep illegal guns off our streets. A special session to pass sensible gun laws is necessary to keep guns out of the wrong hands, decrease gun-related deaths and make New York the nation’s leader in combating gun violence. It is long past time to improve our gun laws, particularly in light of increasing gun violence, and New York should lead the way.”

"Depriving police and prosecutors of information available through microstamping is not some sort of affirmation of the Second Amendment," said **Senator Jose Peralta**, Senate sponsor of the microstamping bill and 13 other pieces of gun legislation. "It is instead a guarantee of more bloodshed. If there was ever a time and if there was ever an issue for Democrats and Republicans to do everything possible to find common ground, now is the times and gun violence is the issue."

"This year, gun violence has been very prevalent in New York City. These incidents compel responsible legislators and community members to combat the scourge of gun violence," said **Senator Eric Adams**. "As legislators, we must collaborate on solutions to make our City a safer place. We have the duty to protect our citizens from the disastrous effects of gun violence."

"It seems every week brings a fresh outrage, but the alarm bells continue to go unheeded. It's time to do right by our children, families, and our police officers by rejecting the gun lobby's extreme, devil-may-care attitude," said **Senator Liz Krueger**. "Governor Cuomo has called for

commonsense action, and Albany's legislative leaders, particularly the Republican Senate majority, have a choice: ignore the gun lobby, heed the governor's call to action, and get this done, or succumb to the same extremism and gridlock that have paralyzed Washington."

"It is a sad reality that it often takes a tragedy - whether it be a movie theater in Colorado, a university classroom in Virginia, or a house of worship in Wisconsin - to generate the necessary outrage to spur action," said **Senator Toby Ann Stavisky**. "Gun violence shouldn't be a partisan issue - Ronald Reagan was one of the strongest proponents of the Brady Bill and Assault Weapons Ban. It is my hope that we can return to Albany and pass the commonsense solutions that the seemingly endless string of shootings in recent months demands."

"Gun violence continues to be a commonplace occurrence in our neighborhood and across the United States," said **Assemblymember Brian Kavanagh**, who represents Campos Plaza on the Lower East Side and co-chairs the New York State Chapter of State Legislators Against Illegal Guns (SLAIG). "The senselessness of the many tragedies we've seen is compounded by the fact that we know we could greatly reduce the violence with more effective laws and the tools to enforce them. That's why I've introduced legislation every year since my first term in the Assembly six years ago to tighten background checks and licensing standards, require safety courses, and insist that gun sellers act more responsibly. Unfortunately the gun industry and its legislative allies have rejected even the most uncontroversial of these measures, protecting their profits at the cost of innocent lives. With each tragedy, we must renew our commitment and our sense of urgency to end the violence. I am proud that so many of my colleagues in government, so many advocates, and so many residents of our community are also ready to carry on the fight."

"I introduced this bill nearly two years ago because I can think of no legitimate reason that an individual would need a military-style assault weapon with the capacity to fire hundreds

of rounds in seconds,” said **Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal** (D/WF – Manhattan). “While the gun lobby likes to say that ‘guns don’t kill people, people kill people,’ the reality is that people with guns kill people, and more efficiently when they have a military-style assault weapon. In a post-September 11th world, Americans have accepted increased restrictions on their liberty in the name of security, yet an average person can walk into a shop and purchase a weapon that is not intended for hunting or show, but designed to exert maximum damage on a human target. Access to these weapons presents a clear threat to the safety of all New Yorkers, and this bill will ensure that New Yorkers are safer in their communities.”

"Thank you Senator Squadron for keeping Gun Violence Prevention on the front burner. With the rise in mass murders in our schools, movie theaters, and houses of worship, Gun Violence Protection is still not an issue discussed on the Federal and State level. Senator Squadron is right. The need is immediate. We must focus on this important issue that will keep the public safe--and that is tracking illegal guns," said **Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel**, the Co-Chair of the New York Chapter of State Legislators Against Illegal Guns.

"Microstamping legislation will prove invaluable. Not only will this bill help to bring closure to victims and survivors of gun violence by providing another tool for law enforcement, it will also deter illegal gun traffickers from supplying violent criminals with weapons. I strongly urge the state Senate to take action on this important measure," said **Assemblyman Joseph R. Lentol** (D-North Brooklyn).

“The carnage from gun violence on our streets – and in communities across the nation – will never end until we pass strong and sensible gun control laws that attack the heart of the problem,” said **Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer**. “That’s why I strongly support the package of gun control bills authored by State Senators Daniel Squadron, Michael Gianaris and Jose Peralta and Assembly members Linda Rosenthal, Brian Kavanaugh,

Michelle Schimel, and all the other elected officials working toward more effective gun control, and endorse their call for a special legislative session. These bills would mandate micro stamping technology on bullets, broaden the definition of assault weapon to include a number of military-style guns, and limit the number of guns one could buy to one in a month, to name just a few proposals. These are all common-sense, life-saving measures and New York must enact them now.”

“One wonders how many more people must be killed or injured before the roadblocks in the New York State Legislature are removed and they finally pass comprehensive, common sense, public safety-enhancing gun control legislation,” said **Councilwoman Rosie Mendez**. “In that vein, I commend Senator Daniel Squadron and his like-minded colleagues who are pushing for an integrated reform package, including such vital initiatives as: microstamping of guns, broadening the definition of ‘assault weapon,’ capping the number of guns an individual can buy per month, closing loopholes in background checks and providing safety training courses for gun owners. Public safety is our shared responsibility and responsible gun control and violence prevention initiatives should be our collective priority.”

“At a time when guns laws are being steadily weakened at the federal level, New York State must do everything it can to protect its independence when it comes to gun laws,” **Council Member Margaret Chin** said. “New York State should set the standard by having the strongest gun laws in the nation. We need comprehensive laws that address how firearms are purchased, and what guns and ammunition are available. We must implement technology, like microstamping, that will make it easier for law enforcement to do their job, and we must outright ban the sale of military grade weapons. I thank Senator Daniel Squadron for taking the lead on this issue and for calling on the legislature to act. Between July 4 and August 13, 2012, more than twenty people were shot in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Harlem, including a 2- and a 4-year old. In my district, on the Lower East Side, there have been several shootings

and shots fired, presumably related to drugs and gang violence. Our communities are deeply divided and our young people are growing up surrounded by violence. If that doesn't warrant a special legislative session, than what does?"

"We are a community that has been fired upon - many times by our own youth. Our children and family members are dying from the violence. How long should we continue to bury our own family and friends?" said **Dereese Huff, Campos Plaza Tenant Association President**. "I support efforts to control the rampant spread of guns in our neighborhoods. We all deserve the right to live a long and secure life, and not to be killed by a stray bullet. As a tenant leader, I see the pain and fear in the faces of my fellow NYCHA residents. I hope that our lawmakers hear our voices, our chorus of pain, and act quickly to protect us from the dangers of uncontrolled gun sales."

"I totally support stronger gun control. I just don't know how mothers have not already started Angry Mothers Against Guns. The pain of losing a child is not something that goes away," said **Aixa Torres, Smith Houses Resident Association President**. "Since I have been President I've seen this tragedy far too many times. I want to thank Senator Squadron for taking up this battle and I support him 1000% on this legislation."

"Only those who are properly trained and screened should be allowed to carry guns. What we need now is more vigilance and control over gun sales, and I am a full supporter of stricter guidelines for weapon sales on the state and national levels," said **Nancy Ortiz, Vladeck Houses Tenant Association President**. "As it stands currently, anyone can travel to another state, walk into a Walmart, buy as many guns as possible, and transport them back to our neighborhoods, where our families live and work. In many cases, guns find their way into the hands of our youth. Our neighborhood is underserved as it stands with regards to social and after-school programs for our youth, and allowing gun control to remain as weak as it is now only adds to the growing violence in our city."

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