



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

## Senator Mark Grisanti Sponsoring “Phoenix’s Law” in State Senate

MARK GRISANTI April 28, 2013

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*Third legislative priority as part of ‘Four-Legged Legislative Priorities’ during Prevention of Animal Cruelty Month*

Senator Mark Grisanti (R, I-60) today announced he will [continue](#) his efforts to increase certain penalties for aggravated cruelty to animals and is urging his colleagues in the New York State Legislature to pass legislation that has been deemed “Phoenix’s Law.”

Grisanti's bill S. 2129 calls for an act to amend the agriculture and markets law by increasing certain penalties for aggravated cruelty to animals by doubling the penalties as well as requiring the individual found guilty of the crime to undergo a psychiatric evaluation.

"The urgency of passing this legislation is something I refuse to ignore," said Senator Grisanti. "In light of the case here in Western New York last fall when a Jack Russell Terrier was purposely set on fire, I believe it is imperative that action be taken to try and stop a horrific incident like that from ever happening again in our community."

An incident that occurred on October 29, 2012 resulted in Phoenix, a five-and-a-half-year-old Jack Russell Terrier, suffering severe burns after it was intentionally set on fire.

Phoenix miraculously survived that incident and weeks of abuse prior by two individuals. As a result, Phoenix has served as a rallying cry for changes to animal abuse laws, not only in the City of Buffalo and the rest of Western New York, but across the state, the country and even worldwide.

"The SPCA Serving Erie County supports S. 2129, the Phoenix Law, without hesitation," said Barbara Carr, executive director of the SPCA Serving Erie County. "I have witnessed the horrific results of aggravated cruelty to animals on far too many occasions. Current law does not go far enough in addressing the seriousness of aggravated animal cruelty, which is defined under the law as an act "whereby a person is guilty when, with no justifiable purpose, he or she intentionally kills or intentionally causes serious physical injury to a companion animal. Violence is always violence, no matter the number of legs on the victim and needs to be considered seriously by our courts in order to protect animals, and in addition, the people of the community."

Senator Grisanti has heard from many constituents who favor this proposed legislation.

“Mistreatment of any animal should not be tolerated,” said Grisanti. “I want to see this bill become Phoenix’s Law so that we will have on the books a strong piece of legislation that results in stiff punishment for anyone convicted of such a heinous act. By strengthening the penalties and requiring psychiatric evaluation, and if necessary treatment, we will be able to better protect our animals as well as the public as a whole.”

Senator Grisanti currently represents the 60th Senate District that includes parts of the City of Buffalo, the Northtowns and the Southtowns. Senator Grisanti is Chairman of the Environmental Conservation Committee and currently sits on the Finance, Cities, Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Higher Education, Infrastructure and Capital [Investment](#), Insurance, Labor and [Veterans](#), Homeland Security and Military Affairs Committees in the Senate as well as the MS Legislative Alliance for the Senate.

*Senator Grisanti is releasing his “four-legged legislative priorities” during the month of April in honor “Prevention of Animal Cruelty Month”. This is the third legislative priority in no specific order.*