



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

## Senator Flanagan Fights To Protect Police Animals

JOHN J. FLANAGAN May 23, 2013

| ISSUE: **CRIME**

Senator John Flanagan (2<sup>nd</sup> Senate District) announced that the New York State Senate and Assembly have passed legislation that would increase penalties for killing a police dog or police horse in the line of duty. The legislation, which Senator Flanagan sponsored, is a clear recognition of the importance of the lives of police animals and the vital role they play in crime solving as well as rescue and recovery operations.

State and local law enforcement agencies increasingly rely on these animals for many aspects of law enforcement. On Long Island, police dogs have helped apprehend criminals who pose a threat to residents, protecting the lives of their fellow officers and our residents.

In one of the most celebrated recent cases, Suffolk County Police K-9 dog Chase was essential in finding and saving a local doctor who was lost in Caleb Smith State Park in Smithtown in 2012. Chase found the man after tracking his scent and then stayed by his side until rescue personnel arrived to assist the man.

“Police animals serve an extremely valuable purpose in our community in a variety of ways. More importantly, they are valued members of the police family and deserve to be protected.

This bill will help do that and I am hopeful that Governor Cuomo will sign this bill into law,” stated Senator Flanagan.

Under current law, killing a police animal is a Class A misdemeanor. This legislation would make such an action a class E felony and would make this crime punishable by up to 4 years in prison, which would be the highest penalty for killing an animal in the state.

If the legislation is signed into law by Governor Cuomo, it would go into effect on November 1<sup>st</sup>.