



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terry Gipson

## Senator Gipson's Statement on Case That Inspired 'Rosie's Law'

TERRY GIPSON July 11, 2013

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### **SENATOR GIPSON'S STATEMENT ON CASE THAT INSPIRED 'ROSIE'S LAW'**

POUGHKEEPSIE, NY -- Senator Terry Gipson (D-Dutchess, Putnam) issued the following statement after the New York State Appellate Court's decision to uphold the use of a facility dog in the case of the People of the State of New York v. Victor Tohom. Because of this case, Senator Gipson introduced 'Rosie's Law' (S.4865/A.7159) which would permit judges the discretion to allow certain witnesses to be accompanied by a facility dog when providing testimony.

"The court's decision solidifies the need for legislation to ensure that those on the stand facing challenging circumstances have access to the comfort and support they need to complete the difficult process of testifying. I am committed to working to get 'Rosie's Law' passed so that we may have a more compassionate justice system. The victim of this heinous crime would have been unable to provide her invaluable testimony without the comfort provided by Rosie."

Rosie's Law is named after Rosie, the first judicially approved courtroom dog in New York State. With Rosie's help, a 15-year-old girl (known in the case as "Jessica") from Dutchess

County was able to provide testimony against her father who had raped and impregnated her over the course of four years of abuse. This testimony led to the man's conviction. Rosie passed away in November 2012.

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