



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

## Senator Bonacic Announces New Law to Increase Penalties for Killing a Police Animal

JOHN J. BONACIC August 9, 2013

### *Makes the Killing of Police Animals a Felony*

Senator John J. Bonacic (R/C/I- Mt. Hope) recently announced that legislation he cosponsored making the killing of a police animal a felony has been signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo. Specially-trained police animals, particularly dogs and horses, are often put in harm's way when they are relied upon by law enforcement to keep New Yorkers safe. The new law will hold individuals who kill these animals accountable.

“Just like humans, police animals are trained officers that put themselves in harm’s way to protect our safety. Often, they go where others cannot go in order to keep us safe. Someone who kills a police animal is attempting to escape being apprehended by law enforcement. This new law will ensure that those who kill or injure these animals face felony charges for their deplorable crimes,” said Senator Bonacic.

Law enforcement agencies have increasingly relied on the use of animals to assist with a variety of tasks to protect New Yorkers, including crime solving as well as rescue and recovery operations. The animals' specialized abilities are the result of extensive training that requires a great deal of time and resources. The killing of a police animal is both a tragic event and a serious loss to law enforcement in their work to keep New Yorkers safe. The new

law will raise the penalty for killing a police dog or a police horse while it is performing its duties from a class A misdemeanor to a class E felony.

The new law takes effect on November 1, 2013.