



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Empowering Seniors To Fight Scam Artists

JAMES L. SEWARD November 24, 2014

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**ONEONTA, 11/24/14** -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today announced that he will be hosting a series of free senior scam prevention forums in Cobleskill, Olive, and Sidney in the coming weeks.

**“Scam artists are becoming more and more sophisticated and senior citizens are quite often the targets of these ruthless criminals,”** said Senator Seward. **“Alerting seniors to some common**

**schemes and arming them with the tools needed to steer clear of these devious crimes will go a long way toward safeguarding their financial savings and well being, that's why I am sponsoring these events."**

Senator Seward is partnering with the New York State Department of State to inform senior citizens and others about the alarming trend of senior targeted scams. A specialist with the Division of Consumer Protection will conduct the free presentation, helping senior citizens proactively protect their identities and avoid becoming the victims of a scam.

Scams targeting senior citizens are on the rise. According to the AARP, roughly one-third of all scam victims are 65 or older. AARP estimates that fraud costs older Americans more than \$3 billion a year, but the true figure is many times higher, because most of these crimes go unreported out of embarrassment.

In 2014, the state senate passed a package of eight bills designed to prevent criminals from using financial schemes to prey upon senior citizens. The state assembly has yet to act on these measures.

**"Educating senior citizens so they are able to recognize criminal scams is a helpful step, however, we also need to strengthen our laws to clamp down on these crimes and the criminals who commit them. Enacting stiffer penalties and providing investigators and prosecutors with the proper resources will go a long way toward stopping those who exploit senior citizens,"** Seward added.

The senior scam prevention forums will take place on:

- Tuesday, December 2nd from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Cobleskill Community Library, 110 Union Street in Cobleskill;
- Tuesday, December 9th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Olive Free Library, 4033 Route 28A in West Shokan;

- Tuesday, December 16th from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Sidney Memorial Public Library, 8 River Street in Sidney.

The forums are free and open to the public.

Additional information on senior scams is available online at the [Division of Consumer Protection website](#).