



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senator Catharine Young Urging Governor Cuomo to Sign S.7818 So That Mentally Ill Released From Prison Like Ismaaiyl Brinsley Receive Treatment

CATHARINE YOUNG December 22, 2014

| ISSUE: **CRIME, MENTAL HEALTH, POLICE, LAW**

For Release: Immediate, December 22, 2014

*“Police Officers Particularly Are Targets Of Former Inmates Who Have Axes To Grind”*

“The New York Times report today that police assassin Ismaaiyl Brinsley had a history of mental illness and multiple previous arrests follows a disturbingly familiar pattern. Brinsley, a multi-state drifter who was born in Brooklyn, reportedly had been arrested 20 times. His family confirmed he was mentally ill and previously had taken medications. He stated in a 2011 court proceeding that he had been institutionalized in the past. All of the red flags were waving wildly, yet the killer apparently was not in any treatment program,” said Senator Catharine Young, (R,C,I-Olean).

“It is true that Brinsley was not a New York resident when he traveled from Maryland to the City so he could murder police officers. It also is alarmingly true that we have had case after case in New York of violent crime because people with serious mental illness are being released from our prisons with no follow up treatment to ensure their own safety or the safety of others,” Senator Young said.

“Governor Cuomo has the ‘Prisoners Mental Health Discharge Planning Bill’ (S.7818) sitting on his desk for signature right now. Indications are that he may veto the legislation because some contend it will be too expensive to evaluate mentally ill prisoners upon release. Actually, the bill would save the state money because treatment reduces recidivism rates. Re-incarceration of the mentally ill is far more costly than community-based treatment. The new law also would save families like the Ramos’ and Liu’s from the heartache of having a loved one murdered. You can’t put a price on public safety,” she said.

“The Senate and Assembly passed this legislation to ensure released inmates would be given a discharge plan, appropriate medications, an appointment with a community program, and would allow parole officers to the list of people who can refer someone with a mental illness to a hospital for evaluation,” she added.

“Police officers particularly are targets of former inmates who have axes to grind. The current anti-law enforcement demagoguery by so-called leaders has inflamed people with mental illness like Brinsley who act out on their impulses. Our police officers put their lives in jeopardy every day protecting us and we owe it to them to have systems in place that

prevent violence committed by people with untreated mental illness,” Senator Young said.

“The Governor should sign the legislation immediately in honor and memory of our brave heroes NYPD Officers Ramos and Liu. If he doesn’t, there will be more grieving families wondering why action wasn’t taken to better protect their loved ones,” she said.