



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Martin J. Golden

## Senator Golden Joins Colleagues in Advancing Efforts in New York State Against Human Trafficking

MARTIN J. GOLDEN January 13, 2015

ALBANY – State Senator Martin J. Golden (R-C-I, Brooklyn) today joined his colleagues in the New York State Senate in voting to support the Trafficking Victims Protection and Justice Act (S.7), that toughens penalties against those who buy and sell young women, men, and children and reduces the stigma defendants may face when they are victims of the massive \$32 billion sex trafficking industry.

Key provisions of the measure include increasing the accountability of traffickers and buyers by raising the penalty for sex trafficking to a class B violent felony; creating the felony sex offense of “aggravated patronizing a minor”; and aligning the penalties for patronizing a minor with those of statutory rape.

The bill will also strengthen the investigative tools used to build a case against traffickers. Sex trafficking will be an affirmative defense to prostitution and the term “prostitute” will be eliminated from the Penal Law, as that term stigmatizes defendants who are in fact victims of sex trafficking. Nowhere else in the state’s Penal Law are individuals identified by the crime they allegedly committed.

Senator Marty Golden stated, “Throughout New York State, innocent people are bought and sold like property each year. Human trafficking, a modern version of the slave trade, is a devastating human rights violation occurring in our own backyards. I am proud that my colleagues in the State Senate have made passage of this bill one of the first legislative accomplishments of this session. Today, we have sent a message that this must be the year the State Assembly gets on board with us and stands up against human trafficking.”

The bill was sent to the Assembly.