



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

## Senator Gallivan Attends First Hearing on Police Safety & Public Protection

PATRICK M. GALLIVAN February 4, 2015

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The New York State Senate Wednesday held the first in a series of public hearings to provide a thorough review of issues affecting the safety of law enforcement and the public in New York City. The hearing was jointly convened by four Senate committees to address serious concerns raised by the shooting deaths of two NYPD Officers, Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu, in addition to other recent attacks and hostility directed at law enforcement.

The Senate Standing Committees include: Codes, chaired by Senator Michael Nozzolio (R-C, Fayette); Crime Victims, Crime and Corrections, chaired by Senator Pat Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma); Investigations and Government Operations, chaired by Senator Carl L. Marcellino (R, Syosset); and Civil Service and Pensions, chaired by Senator Martin Golden (R-C-I, Brooklyn).

Senator Gallivan said, “It’s important that we hear from members of the law enforcement community, legal experts and others as we explore ways to improve police and public safety across New York. As a former State Trooper and Sheriff of Erie County, I understand the dangers police officers face and have great respect for the men and women who put their lives on the line every day. It is in everyone’s best interest to make sure those in law enforcement are the best trained, best equipped, and best prepared. We must evaluate the entire criminal justice system to determine if reforms are warranted in order to improve police safety, better protect our communities and ensure that justice is served fairly.”

Senator Nozzolio said, “These hearings are an important first step toward creating new initiatives and legislation to strengthen our criminal justice laws and establish additional protections to keep our first responders, police, fire and emergency providers, safe from harm. As Chairman of the New York State Senate Codes Committee, I look forward to continuing the effort we have started here today to develop genuine, lasting solutions to eliminate violent crime in our communities and ensure the safety of our first responders.”

Senator Marcellino said, “Our communities are safer because of the sacrifices police officers and first responders make every day. It is a tough job and we must do all that we can to see that their jobs aren’t made even more difficult. It is time that we use all our available resources to review our laws and training procedures so that we protect both the rights of citizens and the safety of our police force.”

Senator Golden - a former New York City Police Officer - said, “It is our job to begin to heal the divide between the police department and communities in the city that are distrustful of our police. Only when both the police and the public are working in concert with each other to ensure the safety of the city can we fully understand how important the relationship between the public and the police really is.”

The hearing provided a comprehensive examination of New York City’s criminal justice system, including:

- The safety of New York City police officers and other first responders in the current climate;
- Statistics on assaults upon police officers and discussions about adequate training and equipment and the risks the police must take while in the line of duty;
- The impact of community policing;
- The need for state action to assure adequate police disability and death benefits, impose stricter penalties and deny bail for people who assault police officers and/or make threats to the police, and provide increased treatment for criminals with mental illnesses, among other measures; and
- The grand jury process and procedure.

Those providing testimony included: William J. Bratton, New York City Police Commissioner;

Patrick J. Lynch, President, Patrolmen's Benevolent Association; Edward D. Mullins, President, Sergeants Benevolent Association; Cyrus R. Vance, District Attorney, New York County; Daniel M. Donovan Jr., District Attorney, Richmond County; Paul E. O'Connell, Professor, Iona College; Eugene O'Donnell, Lecturer, John Jay College of Criminal Justice; Dr. Michael Jenkins, Assistant Professor, The University of Scranton; Stephen J. Cassidy, President, Uniformed Firefighters' Association; Israel Miranda, President, Uniformed EMTs, Paramedics & Fire Inspectors F.D.N.Y. – Local 2507; and Michael J. Palladino, President, The Detective's Endowment Association, Inc.

The next public hearing examining police safety and public protection is being scheduled for later this month in Albany. Additional hearings are also being planned for other parts of the state.