



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Keep Sex Offenders Away From Their Victims & Schools

JAMES L. SEWARD February 19, 2015

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**ONEONTA, 02/19/15** – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I- Oneonta) today announced that he has introduced legislation ([S.2609](#)) to prohibit sex offenders from residing near their victims or near any school.

**“We must do all we can to safeguard children and victims from sexual offenders,”** said Senator Seward. **“My legislation bars the most serious predators from residing near their victims or near a school and will close an existing loophole in addition to providing a needed layer of protection.”**

Senator Seward’s legislation would prohibit Level 2 and Level 3 sex offenders from residing within 1,500 feet of their victim; entering or residing within 1,500 feet of school grounds; and from attending or participating in school events or activities. Violators would face a class E felony charge, punishable by up to one to four years in prison.

In 2007 Oneida County, which borders Senator Seward’s district, established a county law restricting where sex offenders may live. Herkimer County has been contemplating a similar law. However, the local laws are now void due to a New York State Court of Appeals decision announced this week.

**“The recent Court of Appeals decision preventing local governments from imposing their own residency restrictions on convicted sex offenders points to the need for state action to close this loophole. My legislation will do that so children and victims will be better shielded from these**

**known sexual predators,”** added Seward.

Senator Seward has long been committed to protecting children from sexual predators. He has supported numerous measures to update laws and close loopholes to allow detection and prosecution of child predators, including:

*Omnibus Sex Offender Registration Act of 1995*, which established a Sex Offender Registry in New York State;

*Sexual Assault Reform Act of 2000*, which prohibited certain sex offenders from entering school grounds or other facilities where children are cared for and increased sentences for sexual assault against a child contacted by the internet;

*Sex Offender Management & Treatment Act of 2007*, which established comprehensive reforms to manage the most dangerous recidivistic sex offenders and enhance public safety.

Senator Seward's bill has been referred to the Senate Crime Victims, Crime and Correction Committee.