



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

Senate Passes Bill to Create a Registry of Violent Offenders

ANDREW J LANZA May 20, 2015

“Brittany’s Law” Provides Public with Access to Information About Potentially Dangerous Felons

The New York State Senate today approved The Domestic Violence Protection Act –Brittany’s Law, a bill that would increase the safety and awareness of communities by increasing access to information about convicted violent felons. The bill (S513), cosponsored by Senator Andrew Lanza, would create a publicly accessible registry of all individuals convicted of a violent felony and allow local law enforcement to keep track of their location.

Senator Lanza said, “The Domestic Violence Protection Act – Brittany’s Law represents a major step forward for New Yorkers in the fight against violent crime and domestic abuse crimes. By putting new measures in place to track violent offenders and keep our communities informed of their whereabouts, Brittany’s Law will save lives. As Vice Chairman of the Senate Codes Committee, I am committed to enacting tougher sentencing laws for violent criminals, reinforcing laws to protect women and children from domestic violence, and strengthening the rights of crime victims to prevent future tragedies from occurring.”

“The Domestic Violence Protection Act – Brittany’s Law” is named for 12-year-old Brittany Passalacqua, who was brutally murdered along with her mother, Helen Buchel, at their home in Geneva, Ontario County, in 2009. The killer, John Edward Brown, was on parole at the time

of the murder. He was released early from prison after serving only 2 ½ years for assaulting his infant daughter in 2003.

Today, Senate Republicans held a press conference to call on the Assembly to pass this important legislation. The Senate has passed the measure every year since 2011, but the Assembly has repeatedly refused to bring this bill to the floor for a vote. The Senators were joined by Dale Driscoll and Joan Tandle, Brittany's grandmothers, and Linda Randolph, whose daughter Shannon Pepper was viciously attacked by a man with a prior domestic abuse conviction.

Under the bill, passed today, all individuals convicted of a violent felony must register with the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) upon discharge, parole, or release from any state or local facility, hospital, or institution. The registry would be accessible to the public, similar to the registry of sex offenders that the state currently has in place. The legislation also establishes annual registration requirements for offenders to allow local law enforcement agencies and the state to monitor the whereabouts of these individuals.

“New York State currently requires all convicted sex offenders to register with the state and keeps track of those individuals. It makes no sense that we do not do the same for those who commit violent felony crimes against our citizens,” said Senator Lanza. “We cannot continue to put innocent New Yorkers at risk.”

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.

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