



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

SENATOR NOZZOLIO BACKS DA AND STATE POLICE IN USE OF TOUCH DNA TESTING

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO August 18, 2010

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Waterloo- New York State Senator Mike Nozzolio today reiterated his strong support for Seneca County District Attorney Barry Porsch and Investigator Jeff Arnold's efforts to utilize new touch DNA technology to solve the 25 year old murder case of Kristin O'Connell.

Kristin O'Connell was murdered in 1985 while visiting Seneca County and her case has never been solved. New evidence could be introduced through the use of touch DNA testing, a method of analyzing the DNA of skin cells left behind by an assailant. The specialized testing is only performed in a select few labs around the world.

Independent Forensic Services in the Netherlands is world renowned for its technical expertise in touch DNA testing. However, the New York State Department of Health has so far refused to allow Seneca County District Attorney Barry Porsch to utilize this laboratory, despite being the most highly qualified laboratory to perform the testing.

Senator Nozzolio commented, "We must do everything possible to bring Kristin O'Connell's killer to justice and grant some closure to the O'Connell family. It is vital that the New York State Department of Health grant Seneca County permission to use the best touch DNA laboratory in the world to handle the sensitive evidence in this case."

In his recent letter to the Dr. Richard Daines, Commissioner of the New York State Department of Health, Senator Nozzolio implored the Commissioner to reconsider the District Attorney's request and grant the necessary waiver to allow Independent Forensic Services to perform touch DNA testing on the remaining evidence in this case.

"The O'Connell family deserves to know what happened to Kristin. We appreciate Senator Nozzolio's efforts to convince the Department of Health to allow Independent Forensic Services to conduct the specialized touch DNA testing needed to solve this case," said Seneca County District Attorney Barry Porsch.

District Attorney Porsch also announced a new \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of Kristin O'Connell's killer. Senator Mike Nozzolio said, "It is our hope that this reward, coupled with the use of the touch DNA testing, will finally allow this case to be resolved. That is why it is so important that the New York State Department of Health permit the usage of Independent Forensic Services."

Senator Nozzolio promised to continue fighting on behalf of Seneca County and the O'Connell family. "No family should ever have to go through what the O'Connell family has had to endure. Our law enforcement officials need to be given every tool necessary to bring vicious criminals like Kristin's killer to justice. I will continue to support Seneca County's efforts to utilize the best laboratories in the world to help bring this case to a close," concluded Senator Nozzolio.