



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Martin J. Golden

## Legislation must become law to protect our children

MARTIN J. GOLDEN October 23, 2011

I recently joined my colleague Assemblymember Nicole Malliotakis in calling upon the New York State Legislature to approve legislation that will increase the penalties for predators who attempt to lure or entice a child by various means.

The bill, S. 2210, which I sponsored in the State Senate, would enhance penalties for those who solicit youths for criminal activity or sexual encounters by using a vehicle, arranging to meet in a secluded area, or through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, e-mail, text messaging and more.

The legislation would increase the penalty to a class D felony when a person over the age of 18 is found guilty of attempting to lure or entice a child under the age of 17 into a vehicle, building or other isolated area for the purposes of committing a criminal offense.

Currently, any person who attempts to lure or entice a child into a secluded area for illegal purposes is charged with endangering the welfare of a child which is only a class A misdemeanor. While there are several crimes that address the criminal acts which take place after the child has actually been lured away, this bill would focus on and severely punish those who attempt to do so.

Additionally, the increased penalty would apply to those who lure or harass knowingly, someone under the age of 17, by means of computer communication in order to solicit a sexual encounter or to commit a criminal offense with or against.

Current law does not specifically address the harassment of a child via computer. As children increasingly use computers for a variety of reasons, all too often they are harassed by predators that use computers to initiate sexual encounters. This bill would codify this relatively new and horrendous act, making it a class D felony.

We have heard enough horror stories of predators that have used the computer to chat and e-mail with the youth of our community for all the wrong reasons. That is why I am working with my colleague, Assemblymember Malliotakis, in standing up for all children and families here in New York State, so that we can increase penalties for such crimes and better protect our children.

In this day and age, we must do all we can to protect our children at all times. Whether they are walking home from school, or playing in the park, or surfing the web, there need to be adequate laws on the books that safeguard our children.

For these reasons, and for the future of our children, this legislation must become law so that we can prevent these horrific acts from happening within our society. I urge my colleagues in the State Senate and the State Assembly to approve this bill.