



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Important Bills Passed This Week: Higher Safety Standards For Baby Cribs, Grants For Volunteer & Fire Ambulance Co., and More!

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS March 13, 2014

**Higher Safety Standards For Baby Cribs Sold In New York:** Recent federal rules established by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission enhanced crib design standards and prohibited the use of cribs that fail to meet those standards by all public child care providers and places of public accommodation. Senate Bill S.6250A would update crib safety standards to comply with the new federal rules. This would increase child safety in facilities where children receive care and supervision while limiting the jurisdiction of local Offices of Children and Family Services to those facilities.

**Harsher Penalties For Criminal Sale Of Controlled Substances By Practitioners/Pharmacists:** The majority of pharmacists and practitioners prescribe and dispense controlled substances responsibly, with intent to heal and relieve pain. A small number of those who fill prescriptions do so outside of good faith, and present a growing threat to public health that claims more lives each year and increases public expenditures caused by the growing need for law enforcement and addiction treatment. Fatalities from opioid overdoses increased 20% between 2004 and 2009 in New York City alone, according to a recent report from the federal Center for Disease Control. New York penal code already includes a statute that penalizes physicians who prescribe controlled substances outside of good faith, but has no similar law for pharmacists and practitioners who participate in criminal dispensation.

Senate Bill S.2941 would define the criminal sale of a controlled substance by a pharmacist or practitioner as a class B felony punishable by up to 25 years in prison.

**Grants For Volunteer Fire And Ambulance Companies:** Senate Bill S.3646A will give volunteer fire and ambulance companies access to the same records management improvement grants that are available to county and municipal emergency service providers. Maintaining records such as active member lists, mutual aid agreements, and budgets would help these essential not-for-profit organizations operate more efficiently and effectively in the communities they serve.

**No School Leadership Positions For Sex Offenders:** Senate Bill S.3309 would amend the state corrections code to prevent any person required by law to register as a sex offender from holding the positions of principal, trustee, officer, or board member of any public school in any city, charter, BOCES, union free, common, or central school district. These positions of trust involve duties and require decisions that directly impact children and affect policy, and should not be held by individuals that have proven themselves untrustworthy through illegal sexual behaviors.

**Harsher Penalties For Theft Of A Car Occupied By A Child:** Senate Bill S.1905 would add the act of carjacking in which a child under the age of 16 is present to the definition of grand larceny in the third degree, punishable by a minimum of one year and up to 7 years in prison. Additionally, in cases where the carjacker is escaping another crime, is armed with a deadly weapon, and/or threatens future harm to another person, the punishment would increase to up to 25 years in prison. These crimes are far more serious than carjacking and theft incidents that do not involve children, and should carry a harsher penalties.