



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Pokémon GO to sex offenders' houses often — new Westchester and Rockland report illustrates

JEFFREY D. KLEIN August 4, 2016

| ISSUE: **SEX OFFENDERS, CHILD SAFETY, PUBLIC PROTECTION**

Klein & Carlucci release bombshell report alarming number of Pokemon popping up at pedophiles' homes

Rockland, NY — State Senators Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/ Westchester) and David Carlucci (D-Rockland) on Thursday released the second in a series of bombshell investigative reports, “Protecting Our Children: How Pokémon GO and Augmented Reality Games Expose Children to Sex Offenders, Westchester and Rockland Counties.”

The Pokémon GO craze, now downloaded 100 million times, presents serious dangers to children as they hunt down virtual Pokémon in the real world and may cross paths with strangers, including dangerous sexual predators.

The investigation found:

- **Pokémon appeared in front of the homes 93 times during the 100 visits in Westchester and Rockland counties.**
- **Within search area, 14 Pokéstops and Gyms were located near dangerous predators homes.**

- **An in-game feature — Pokémon, pokéstop or gym, was present in front of or within a half -block of a home 63 percent of the time.**

“Children enjoying Pokémon GO concern themselves with catching their prey — a wild Zubat, a Pinsir or a Pikachu — not becoming someone’s prey. We know that sex offenders’ have the highest recidivism rates of any crime and we have a duty to protect our children so they can have safe fun as new technology emerges. That so many Pokémon materialized in front of dangerous sexual predators’ homes illustrates the dire need to scrub all in game activity within 100-feet of their addresses. I hope Niantic will police themselves before we pass this necessary legislation,” **said Senator Klein.**

“Pokémon GO is the first in a long line of games that will no doubt introduce real world problems into virtual world games. Parents should be able to let their kids enjoy games without the concern of coming into contact with sexual predators. I commend Senator Klein and Senator Savino for stepping up and introducing legislation to prohibit sexual offenders from being able to play Pokémon GO to ensure the safety of our children. I am proud to be a sponsor of this legislation,” **said Senator Carlucci.**

Members of the Independent Democratic Conference introduced two pieces of legislation to keep children safe from sexual predators while they enjoy new technology.

While Governor Andrew Cuomo took immediate steps to protect New York’s children before the legislative session resumes, the IDC will codify language that prohibits high-level sexual predators from using augmented reality games to prey on children. The members of the Independent Democratic Conference introduced S.8174 which would ban sex offenders on parole or probation from downloading and playing these games.

It is also incumbent upon game developers to ensure children enjoying its products are safe. Members of the IDC also introduced S.8173 which would require game developers to

regularly consult the Division of Criminal Justice Service's New York State Sex Offender Registry and remove all in-game objectives from within 100-feet of the game. Non-compliance would result in fines of \$100 per incident.

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