



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month ~ 'Wear Purple Day' on October 20th highlights state's annual 'Shine the Light' campaign to prevent domestic violence ~ Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes holding awareness walk in Penn Yan on Saturday

THOMAS F. O'MARA September 30, 2016

| ISSUE: **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**



As a former district attorney, I know that domestic violence has long been and continues to be one of law enforcement's most difficult challenges. The same goes for governmental efforts to battle against it – to take steps to try to prevent it, and to protect victims and try to help them reclaim their lives. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, one in four women will be the victim of domestic violence at some point in their lives. By toughening our laws

and continuing to raise public awareness, we can better prevent -- and help protect the victims of -- domestic violence. And we can, and will, bring the perpetrators of this terrible crime to justice.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and the State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence is conducting New York's annual "Shine the Light on Domestic Violence" public awareness campaign, including the annual "Wear Purple Day" on Thursday, October 20th.

Find out more from the [**Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence**](#).

Safe Harbors of the Finger Lakes, Inc. is holding a Domestic Violence Awareness Walk in Penn Yan on Saturday, October 1st. Read and listen to more on Finger Lakes Radio, "[**Domestic Violence Awareness Walk in Penn Yan on Saturday**](#)."

Read Senator O'Mara's column, "[**Awareness Can Help Stop Domestic Violence**](#)"

In 2016, the Senate approved the following pieces of legislation aimed at strengthening the state's domestic violence protections:

> [**Senate Bill Number 3087**](#) would provide stronger protections for vulnerable domestic violence victims by allowing them to testify via closed-circuit television in criminal proceedings. Current law only allows children who are considered vulnerable by a judge to testify via closed-circuit television. This legislation would also give domestic violence victims the option of testifying outside of the physical presence of their abusers to help facilitate cooperation with prosecutions; and

> [**Senate Bill Number 6658**](#) would enact the "Domestic Violence Protection Act," also known as "Brittany's Law," a measure that would increase the safety and awareness of communities by increasing access to information about convicted violent felons. The legislation 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. Brittany's Law is named in memory of 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.

As a former district attorney, I know that domestic violence has long been and continues to be one of law enforcement's most difficult challenges. The same goes for governmental efforts to battle against it – to take steps to try to prevent it, and to protect victims and try to help them reclaim their lives. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, one in four women will be the victim of domestic violence at some point in their lives. By toughening our laws and continuing to raise public awareness, we can better prevent -- and help protect the victims of -- domestic violence. And we can, and will, bring the perpetrators of this terrible crime to justice.