



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Seward Joins Call for Community Heroes Protection Act

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR January 30, 2017

| ISSUE: **POLICE, FIREFIGHTERS, FIRST RESPONDERS**



**ALBANY, 01/30/17** -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today joined a bipartisan group of state legislators along with police, firefighters, and emergency responders to call for support of the Community Heroes Protection Act. Senator Seward is co-sponsor of legislation ([S.1114A/A.2962A](#)) which would designate crimes that specifically target police, firefighters, and other emergency service workers as hate crimes.

**“Police, firefighters, and emergency first responders put the lives of others first and it is imperative that we help protect these heroes while they are on the job,”** said Senator Seward. **“The**

**Community Heroes Protection Act will result in a strong deterrent for criminals who violently target people simply because they are wearing a uniform.”**

The Community Heroes Protection Act was inspired by the many brave men and women in uniform who have lost their lives, were injured or targeted simply because of their jobs as protectors of the community. Researchers have found that between 2015 and 2016, there was a 68-percent increase in firearms related fatalities among law enforcement nationwide. This brings the total number of officers who were fatally shot in 2016 in the United States to sixty-four.

The Community Heroes Protection Act classifies all crimes against first responders, such as law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical services personnel as hate crimes. These offenses are designated as hate crimes only if they are intentionally aimed at first responders based on the profile of their career.

In current law, when a person is convicted of a hate crime and the specified offense is a misdemeanor or a class C, D or E felony, the hate crime shall be deemed to be one category higher than the specified offense or one category higher than the offense level applicable to the defendant`s conviction. Police officers and first responders are not included in the current definition of a hate crime.

**“Professionals and volunteers who wear a uniform and serve the public have earned our utmost respect and are true lifesavers. The recent surge in attacks on our first responders is sad and disturbing. It is imperative that we stand shoulder to shoulder with these brave men and women and provide any safeguards possible,”** concluded Seward.



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RELATED LEGISLATION

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**2017-S1114A**

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- Introduced
- ◦ In Committee Assembly

- In Committee Senate
  
- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
  
- ◦ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
  
- Delivered to Governor
  
- Signed By Governor
  
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Designates offenses against law enforcement officers, firefighters and emergency medical services personnel as hate crimes

January 06, 2017

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Fred Akshar**

Do you support this bill?