



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

## Senator Bonacic Supports Legislation to Crack Down on Illegal Gang Activity in New York

JOHN J. BONACIC May 8, 2017



(Albany, NY)- State Senator John J. Bonacic (R/C/I-Mt. Hope) voted to support legislation today that would crack down on illegal gang activity in New York State. The bill (S2410) creates the “Criminal Street Gang Enforcement and Prevention Act” to better prosecute gang violence and stop gang recruitment through proactive community outreach.

“This legislation comes at a critical time as gang activity is on the rise in New York,” said Senator Bonacic. “We’ve seen recently with the killing of innocent lives on Long Island that

the time to act is now. This bill gives law enforcement the tools necessary to fight these gangs, and I'm proud to support it and urge the Assembly to take it up immediately."

Gang violence in urban and suburban areas throughout New York has increased, and the rise of MS-13 – who have claimed at least 11 lives in less than a year – demonstrates a need for a more comprehensive method of tackling gangs. This bill would not only strengthen the legal options available to prosecute street gangs but would also help address many root causes of gang recruitment and growth.

For the first time ever, the legislation legally defines criminal street gangs in New York's penal statutes, giving prosecutors more options when charging offenders. Classifying and identifying this type of criminal activity will also help law enforcement better track gangs. Penalties are increased and new felonies are created for individuals who benefit from gang activity, participate in gang activity, and recruit youth or adults to participate in gang activities.

A new Criminal Street Gang Prevention Fund would also be established to support violence prevention and gang crime deterrence services provided by not-for-profit organizations. The measure would be funded partially through forfeited assets obtained following convictions for gang activity. In addition, schools would consult with the state Division Criminal Justice Services to implement a model curriculum focused on gang violence prevention.