



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Senator Murphy delivers bill to protect first responders

TERRENCE MURPHY May 9, 2017

| ISSUE: **FIRST RESPONDERS**



Albany, NY - A recent study found that 135 law enforcement officers were killed in the line of duty in 2016, the highest total since 2011. Of those killings, 21 came in ambush-style shootings - the highest total in more than two decades.

To help stem the rising tide of attacks on first responders, Senator Terrence Murphy co-sponsored the Community Heroes Protection Act (S1114/A2962A). The legislation designates offenses committed against law enforcement and first responders punishable as hate crimes.

"Our first responders are literally on the firing line every day. Their job is to save lives and all too often they have to be concerned that their own lives are in danger," said Senator Murphy. "They are targeted not because of who they are, but because of what they are and what they represent. This legislation draws a line in the sand and sends a very clear message - we will not tolerate attacks against the men and women that protect us."

"Despite living in a time when crimes specifically targeting first-responders are on the rise, thousands of brave men and women across the state voluntarily put their uniforms on every day to protect and serve our communities," said Senator Fred Akshar, a former Broome County Undersheriff and sponsor of the bill. "The passage of stiffer penalties will not single-handedly protect all of our emergency service workers but we must make it clear that targeted offenses against our Community Heroes will not be taken lightly. We will not be silent while you are selfless."

Senator Martin J. Golden, a former New York City Police Officer said, "Each day, our brave and dedicated law enforcement officers, firefighters, corrections officers, and medical service personnel put their lives on the line for our safety and they are being targeted with violence simply because they wear a first responder uniform. The Community Heroes Protection Act will rightly classify these bias attacks against our law enforcement officers and first responders as hate crimes. This law will see to it that such an offender receives a punishment that fits this heinous crime. As legislators, it is our obligation to help protect our law enforcement officers, firefighters, corrections officers, and medical service personnel as they perform their critical duties protecting the citizens of New York State. Although there will always be danger, I am confident that Community Heroes Protection Act, to be passed by the Senate today, will help protect New York State and that is why it is critical that the Assembly pass this legislation before the end of this session."

Under 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 is deemed to be one category higher than the specified offense. Police officers and first responders are not included in the current definition of a hate crime.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly, where it is sponsored by Assemblyman Peter Abbate, Jr. (A2962A).

The bill's passage today coincided with the annual Police Officers Memorial Ceremony to recognize police officers of New York State who died in the line of duty. Forty new names were added to the New York State Police Officers Memorial's Roll of Honor this year. In addition, the Senate also moved to act on a bill (S1980), sponsored by Senator Gallivan, that would create a State Trooper Highway Memorial Task Force to provide for the recognition of state police who have died in the line of duty.

RELATED LEGISLATION

2017-S1114A

- 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?