



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Families Have Suffered Enough

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR May 24, 2017

| ISSUE: **CRIME VICTIMS**



**ALBANY, 05/24/17** – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today announced senate passage of legislation he co-sponsors which would allow the New York State Parole Board to extend the period of time between reconsidering parole board denials from two years to five years when the inmate was sentenced for a violent crime.

**“To understand how this law would work you need to look no further than the murder of 18 year old Gillian ‘Jill’ Gibbons in 1989 in Oneonta,”** said Senator Seward. **“The convicted killer David Dart received a parole hearing in 2014 and another in 2016 – his parole was unequivocally denied**

**both times. Dart is a confessed murderer who has threatened the victim’s sister and would be a danger to the community if he were released. There is no reason why Dart, or others who have committed such heinous crimes, should be allowed the privilege of a parole hearing every two years.’**

Currently, when parole is denied, the board has the discretion to set the date for reconsideration for parole for any date within two years. [Senate bill 2997-A](#), which is co-sponsored by Seward, would allow the parole board to extend the period of time between reconsidering denials from two years to five years.

In many cases, especially murder and other violent offenses, parole is denied multiple times and extending the timeframe for reconsideration would give the parole board greater discretion in setting hearing dates.

**“Acts of traumatic violence take a toll on a family and forcing individuals to needlessly relive a horrendous crime like murder every two years is cruel and extreme. Victims and their families should be allowed to heal and this legislation is a very small measure to help with that process. I truly hope the state assembly will finally show compassion for victims of violent crimes and join with the senate in passing this legislation,”** Seward added.

The senate has passed this legislation on multiple occasions, but the assembly has never voted on the measure. Companion legislation (A.2350-A) has been introduced in the assembly where it has over fifty sponsors.

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## 2017-S2997A

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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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Increases from twenty-four to sixty months, the time for which reconsideration for parole for a violent felony offense shall be determined

January 18, 2017

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Kenneth P. LaValle**

Do you support this bill?

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