



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

## After Investigation Reveals Allegations that 10 Teachers at Nichols School Had Improper Relationships with Students Over Several Decades, Senator Kennedy & Erie County District Attorney John Flynn Call on NYS to Better Protect Abuse Victims

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY January 10, 2018

| ISSUE: **CHILD VICTIMS ACT, CHILDREN, FAMILIES, SCHOOLS**

*Kennedy, DA John Flynn Push for State Action on Bill That Would Require Private Schools to Report Allegations of Child Abuse in an Educational Setting, Bringing These Institutions in Line with Law Already Applied to Public Schools*

*Officials Also Underscore Need for Passage of Child Victims Act, Which Would Raise Statute of Limitations and Allow Former Students to Seek Legal Action*

BUFFALO, NY – Senator Tim Kennedy (D-Buffalo) joined Erie County District Attorney John Flynn today to call on the state legislature to fast-track legislation that would require private schools to report allegations of child abuse in an educational setting to law enforcement. Their call comes after a recent investigation, conducted by a D.C. firm, found that 10 teachers engaged in inappropriate relationships with students over several decades at Nichols School. Furthermore, the report noted that three former administrators at the school failed to take action against the teachers involved. Under current state law, if the administrators had worked in a public school system, they would have been required to report these teachers to authorities immediately. The bill co-sponsored by Kennedy and supported by Flynn would close this loophole.

“As countless survivors of abuse continue to share their stories nationwide, we are seeing a universal need for corrective change and stronger protections for victims,” said **Senator Tim Kennedy**. “Both of these bills attempt to improve current New York law by strengthening the process for reporting abuse and allowing victims to seek the justice they deserve. Until we close these loopholes, we’re not only failing to give child sexual abuse victims the time they need to process and grieve this unimaginable offense, but we’re allowing abusers the opportunity to commit these tragic acts again. As a state, we need to put the safety and best interests of our children first.”

“Children in private schools are entitled to the same protections from sexual predators as children in public schools,” said **District Attorney John J. Flynn**. “This is long overdue and I am asking the State Legislature to immediately pass this legislation so prosecutors have the ability to hold offenders accountable even when a victim has delayed reporting their abuse to appropriate law enforcement. In addition, I, along with District Attorney’s from across the state, are in favor of the Child Victims Act, which will give us additional time to punish sexual predators for the heinous crimes they commit.”

Under S.4342, private school administrators would be required to forward reports of child abuse committed by school employees or volunteers to authorities. Additionally, it would prohibit private school administrators from withholding an allegation of abuse from authorities in exchange for the accused’s resignation or suspension.

Kennedy and Flynn also reiterated the need for the passage of the Child Victims Act (S.6575), which seeks to make it easier for survivors of child sexual abuse to take legal action as adults. The Act would greatly extend legal timeframes that currently restrict the ability for victims to bring criminal and civil cases. Additionally, it would create a one-year revival period, allowing survivors who were previously barred from bringing a civil claim the ability to bring a new action. This legislation is also supported by the District Attorneys Association of

the State of New York (DAASNY).

Kennedy stood with anti-abuse advocates and abuse survivors from Crisis Services, the Lee Gross Anthonie Child Advocacy Center, and the Stop Abuse Campaign just last month to call on both houses of the state legislature to bring the Child Victims Act to their respective floors for a vote within the first month of session. The bill remains in committee in both houses.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2017-S6575**

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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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Provides for the timeliness of commencing criminal and civil action for sexual offenses committed against children

June 05, 2017

In Senate Committee [Codes](#)

Sponsored by [Brad Hoylman-Sigal](#)

Do you support this bill?

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## 2017-S4342

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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

- Requires school administrators in private schools to report allegations of child abuse in an educational setting

February 10, 2017

In Senate Committee [Rules](#)

Sponsored by [John E. Brooks](#)

Do you support this bill?