



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kemp Hannon

SENATOR HANNON LEADS BIPARTISAN PUSH TO PROTECT SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS

KEMP HANNON February 13, 2018

| ISSUE: **SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVIVORS, RAPE KITS**

| COMMITTEE: **HEALTH**

#ProtectingRapeVictims

- **Creating a Survivor's Bill of Rights**
- **Maintaining Unreported Rape Kits for 20 years**
- **Creating a Rape Kit Tracking System**
- **Establishing a S.A.F.E. Telemedicine Pilot Program**
- **Ensuring victims are never billed for exams**

ALBANY, NY - New York State Senate Health Committee Chairman Kemp Hannon today led a bipartisan push of key measures that would help expand the rights of sexual assault survivors. Senator Hannon, Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas, and other legislators were joined by advocates to discuss the importance of these measures, which will ensure all sexual assault survivors are afforded a greater opportunity to seek justice.

Senator Hannon said, *“This package of legislation aimed at helping survivors of sexual assault builds upon new laws the Senate championed over the last few years to provide funding and make sure New York State is testing all rape kits. This package of bills makes sure survivors rights are clearly spelled out, unreported kits are maintained according to federal best practices, all victims have access to specially trained sexual assault providers, and that hospitals are not inappropriately charging survivors.”*

Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas said, *“Compassion must always be paramount in the law enforcement response to sexual assault victims; it’s the right thing to do and it will help to lock up dangerous criminals. Mandating the quick processing of rape kits, which we did in 2016, was just the first step and helping sexual assault victims through the difficult process of evidence collection is the necessary second step. Legislation that I’ve sponsored – A8401 – would do just that. Victims must be informed of their rights, they must have access to information about the status of evidence analysis and untested rape kits must never be destroyed prematurely. This is common decency and common sense.”*

Assembly Health Committee Chair Richard N. Gottfried said, *“Victims of sexual assault, dealing with the trauma of a violent crime, should never face the additional burden of a hospital billing for forensic exams. Some hospitals have been billing victims despite Federal law designed to prevent this. Our legislation will ensure that no victim will be burdened by a hospital bill for a rape kit.”*

The bills, (S6428A), (S6947A) and (S6964A), focus on creating a Survivor’s Bill of Rights, maintaining unreported rape kits for 20 years, creating a rape kit tracking system, establishing a sexual assault forensic examination (S.A.F.E.) telemedicine pilot program and ensuring victims are never billed for exams.

Amanda Nguyen, CEO and Founder of Rise, said, *“Currently in New York State, rape kits can be destroyed after 30 days. The DNA evidence in a rape kit is both crucial for survivors seeking justice and exonerating the innocent. We are hopeful the state of New York will pass this legislation to meet the federal standard - ensuring rape kits will be preserved for 20 years for the 6.6 million survivors in New York.”*

Nancy Harris, Nurse Practitioner and Manager Forensic Nurse Program for St. Peter’s Health Partners, said, *“All patients/victims of a sexual assault deserve to be provided comprehensive care and appropriate treatment, but many facilities lack the professional training of a sexual assault provider. With a S.A.F.E. pilot program, we can assist the provider through the process and allow the patient timely care,*

treatment, and follow up while following the national standards.”

These measures currently before the houses are necessary to ensure sexual assault survivors in New York get the best treatment possible and are not re-victimized by the system.

To see an archived video of the press conference, click [here](#).

RELATED LEGISLATION

2017-S6428A

- 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

- Provides for the establishment of a sexual assault survivor bill of rights by the department of health, in consultation with the division of criminal justice services and department of law

May 18, 2017

In Senate Committee [Rules](#)

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Do you support this bill?