



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael H. Ranzenhofer

## Protecting Our Schools & Keeping Students Safe

SENATOR MIKE RANZENHOFER September 19, 2018

| ISSUE: **SCHOOL SAFETY, SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER**



Senator Ranzenhofer's column appeared in the Amherst and Clarence Bees on September 19th. Every parent knows that nothing is more important than ensuring the safety of our children. As your State Senator, I have taken a leadership role in the effort to give schools throughout Western New York the resources and tools they need to keep our kids safe.

Many sheriffs and school administrators have discussed this important issue with me. Their input and expertise has helped me to gain insight into what law enforcement and school leaders believe needs to be done.

Specially trained law enforcement can play an important role in our schools, from building trust among the student body to helping to resolve conflict and preventing tragedies. I fully support placing these officers in our local school districts.

Two bills ([S7811A/S7810A](#)) would remove unnecessary barriers and financial hurdles for school districts to hire school resource officers. This legislation would make it easier for schools to receive state financial assistance and hire qualified security personnel. If enacted, the new law would ensure that every school district that wants School Resource Officers could have them.

Another legislative proposal ([S7805](#)) would increase access to school-based mental health services. The bill would reimburse school districts for expenses from hiring a mental health coordinator. This position would be responsible for working with students, faculty and parents to identify, report and address mental health issues that could pose a risk to public safety in any school.

If enacted, the new law would ensure that students get the help they need, while also identifying potential threats before a tragedy occurs.

Other legislative initiatives include taking steps to improve intelligence coordination to protect schools against attack and strengthening penalties for crimes that occur on school ground.

Lastly, the recently approved state fiscal plan extended, for five more years, an important state aid reimbursement program that helps local school districts cover the costs of school infrastructure projects, including new safety measures.

That's a positive development, but I am also working to ensure that this funding is actually delivered to our schools in a timely matter. The legislation ([S7846](#)) requires the Smart School

Review Board to meet monthly, approve plans in a more timely manner, and fully deliver the funding within 30 days of the plan's ratification.

It's time for the State Assembly and Governor to help enact a comprehensive school safety package passed by the State Senate, with strong bi-partisan support, earlier this year. This potentially life-saving legislation includes more than a dozen bills to improve school security and keep students safe.

There is nothing more important than protecting our schools and keeping students safe. When it comes to something as crucial as school security and protecting our children, I strongly believe that much more needs to be done. As your State Senator, I will continue leading this important effort.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2017-S7811A**

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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
- 

Relates to a school resource officer program

February 27, 2018

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Patrick M. Gallivan**

Do you support this bill?

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## 2017-S7810A

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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
- 

Relates to a school resource officer program

February 27, 2018

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Patrick M. Gallivan**

Do you support this bill?

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## 2017-S7805

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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
- 

Establishes the New York state school mental health services program coordinator

February 27, 2018

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Thomas D. Croci**

Do you support this bill?

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## 2017-S7846

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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
- 

Relates to approvals, modifications and rejections of smart schools investment plans by the smart schools review board

March 02, 2018

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by Elaine Phillips

Do you support this bill?