



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

## Senator Gallivan Introduces Legislation to Expand SRO Program

JIM RANNEY February 20, 2019

| ISSUE: **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER**



Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) and Assemblywoman Marjorie Byrnes (R-C, Caledonia) have introduced legislation to establish a school resource officer program for districts seeking to enhance safety. The omnibus bill (S.1330/A5480) would clearly define school resource officer (SRO) and, for the first time, provide an important state aid component to allow school districts across the state to fund the program.

“As a former state trooper and Erie County Sheriff, I believe strongly in the SRO program,” Senator Gallivan said. “These officers not only help ensure safety in our schools, they

establish positive relationships between law enforcement and students. SRO's work with school administrators, staff, students and parents to help identify safety issues, train personnel and resolve conflicts before they become more serious. It is time to expand this program statewide, so that every school benefits from having a trained law-enforcement officer on-site."

"Now more than ever, we need to take a preventative approach to keeping our schools safe," said Assemblywoman Byrnes. "The implementation of armed School Resource Officers at the state's expense would break any negative perceptions children may have of law enforcement by providing protection and mentorship, and helping develop trust."

The bill would amend state education law to make the hiring of a school resource officer by a public school district or a charter school a shared service eligible for aid. It would also provide a reimbursement grant program for the hiring of an SRO in a non-public school.

The legislation would also require a SRO to be an experienced active duty or retired member of law enforcement, such as a police officer, state trooper or deputy sheriff. Retired individuals would possess the necessary experience and training, but could be paid less than an active duty police officer due to their retired status. The bill would provide retired police officers who are employed as SRO's with full peace officer powers, giving them the ability to arrest as well as carry a weapon on school grounds while on duty.

Additionally, the bill would amend the state's retirement and social security law to allow school districts to hire retired police officers without needing a waiver for an annual salary of less than \$50,000. Under current law, retired public employees must apply for a waiver in order to earn more than \$30,000 per year. The present cap on earnings can deter the best-qualified and most experienced officers from becoming a SRO.

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**2019-S1330**

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- ◦ In Committee Assembly
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Sponsored by Patrick M. Gallivan

Do you support this bill?