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James Skoufis

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JAMES SKOUFIS August 14, 2019

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****PRESS RELEASE****

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Senator James Skoufis (D-Hudson Valley) stood with Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski (D-Rockland), Monroe Town Supervisor Anthony Cardone, and Aaron Fried, Harper's father and co-founder of HarperSmiles, to announce the Governor has signed Harper's Law.

Harper's Law, named after Harper Fried, requires that retailers selling new furniture over 27 inches tall must contain a tip restraint device and have a permanent warning label describing the dangers of tip-prone furniture to children.

In November of 2016, three-year-old Harper from the Village of Harriman tragically lost her life after a piece of children's furniture accidentally tipped over and fell on her while playing in her bedroom one morning. Since then, Harper's parents, Aaron and Erica, have advocated to change the law and have raised awareness to other families about the risk. Aaron and Erica also launched a foundation, HarperSmiles, to educate communities on the dangers inherent in tip-prone furniture and advocate for measures to better protect children.

In 2016 alone, over 30,000 children visited an emergency room due to tipped-over furniture; dozens of these accidents were fatal. Virtually all of these accidents involved very young children.

"After many years of tireless advocacy, I'm so proud that Harper's Law has been enacted in New York State," **said Senator Skoufis**. "I was honored to fight for this bill's passage alongside Assemblyman Zebrowski and I thank the Governor for signing this bill so quickly after it was delivered to his desk. After suffering the greatest tragedy of all, New York's children will now be safer due to Harper's family's selfless efforts; I'm endlessly grateful for the impact their work will have on our state."

Assemblyman Zebrowski said, "Unfortunately, furniture tip-overs are a risk and heartbreaking reality that exist for far too many families. Harper's Law will remove dangerous furniture from our stores; making homes safer for children. I am proud that New York will become the first State to require tip restraint devices to be included in the sale of furniture. With this law in place, we can help to prevent these unimaginable tragedies. I thank Governor Cuomo for recognizing the importance of this legislation and swiftly signing it into law. I'd also like to

thank Senator Skoufis for his collaboration and extend my utmost gratitude to the Fried Family who worked with us to craft this law in honor of their daughter, Harper. Today we honor her legacy by working to prevent these tragic accidents from happening in the future.”

Aaron Fried, Harper’s father and co-founder of HarperSmiles said, “After experiencing the tragedy that our family and community did, and then finding out that a simple \$2.00 anchor kit could have prevented the untimely death of our little lady, we knew that we needed to move forward with our grief and use the energy behind it to raise awareness of the hazard of furniture tip-overs, as well as create momentum to bring change to an entire industry. We are wholeheartedly thankful for the hard work and dedication of Senators Skoufis, Carlucci, and Larkin, and Assemblymen Zebrowski and Schmitt, as well as Town Supervisor Cardone for their support all these years.”

Anthony Cardone, Monroe Town Supervisor said, “Making an impact is part of what the Town of Monroe and our community is about. Through Erica & Aaron Fried family’s tragedy, came Harper’s legacy, which will protect other children from the potential hazards of furniture tip-overs. The Fried Family, HarperSmiles, its volunteers, and those responsible for “Harper’s Law” will not only make an impact on the Town of Monroe but the State of New York and eventually our nation. We are grateful for all Assemblyman Zebrowski and Senator Skoufis’ efforts in bringing Harpers Law to fruition."

This month, HarperSmiles Inc. is asking members of the community to help out with their school supply drive.

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