



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Monica R. Martinez

New York State Senator Monica R. Martinez Implores Upon Her Colleagues to Make Common Sense Amendments to Bail Reform

MONICA R. MARTINEZ January 27, 2020

| ISSUE: **BAIL REFORM**

****PRESS RELEASE****

New York State Senator Monica R. Martinez Implores Upon Her Colleagues to Make Common Sense Amendments to Bail Reform

“Amendments to bail reform are imperative. Lawmakers should not leave Albany until amendments are passed.”

(HAUPPAUGE, NEW YORK) New York State Senator Monica R. Martinez announced her unwavering commitment to amending the newly enacted bail reform law. At the beginning of the year, Senator Martinez introduced bill S.7156 which seeks to make substantive changes to the new law that took effect on January 1, 2020. Senator Martinez has held meetings throughout her district and in Albany with key stakeholders in various law enforcement organizations and advocate groups to raise awareness of her proposed legislation and obtain input.

“I introduced bill number S.7156, Modified Risk Management for Community Safety, in order to prioritize the well-being of our neighborhoods and allow for comprehensive risk assessments,” said Senator Monica R. Martinez. “Bail was not intended to keep individuals incarcerated due to their socio-economic status but more as a tool to ensure their day in court. A person’s financial capability should not be a factor that determines their detention status. It should be determined by their prior history and the severity of the crime. As policymakers, it is our fiduciary responsibility to safeguard the well-being of our constituencies.”

This legislation will allow judges to have discretion when determining whether an individual should be held pretrial based on their offense and potential risk to themselves and society. The Legislature cannot turn a blind eye to repeat violent offenders and those who pose a threat to our children, families and friends. Bill S.7156 also proposes the creation of an appeals board, to allow prosecutors, defendants and victims to have a voice in the process.

“One must consider the unique risks that a domestic violence offender poses to their partner, children, and community,” said Reina Schiffrin, Executive Director of Victims Information Bureau of Suffolk. “The new Bail Reform Act can result in increased danger and heightened risk of homicide for domestic violence victims. The amendment to the bail reform act put forward by Senator Martinez is extremely important to create some balance for victims’ rights.”

Suffolk County Police Benevolent Association President Noel DiGerolomo said, “the ill-conceived bail reform has tragically taken the lives of New York citizens. It is unconscionable this not a top priority for all lawmakers as it is for Senator Martinez. Every member of the Senate and Assembly should remain in Albany until modifications are made to ensure the safety and security of all New Yorkers.”

“The Suffolk County Deputy Sheriffs Police Benevolent Association supports Senator Martinez and her efforts in addressing the concerns that the bail reform legislation has had on our communities in Suffolk County. We thank Senator Martinez for always being a champion of law enforcement” said President John Becker.

“Bail Reform, as it exists today, is an extreme danger to Public Safety. Day after day we see new headlines of violent crimes that result in the criminal continuing to enjoy their freedoms while the victim suffers. New York needs to stand up for the victims and the law abiding residents before more victims are created,” said Suffolk County Correction Officers President Lou Viscucci, he continued, “ Public Safety should not be a partisan issue and we thank Senator Martinez for proposing these changes.”

“The Nassau County PBA would like to thank Senator Martinez for holding this press conference. We are strongly pushing for much needed changes in the the new bail/ criminal justice reform legislation including, but not limited to, restoring judicial discretion. These changes must be done to ensure our public safety. We will be closely working with the Senate, Assembly, and Governor’s office to accomplish this and it must be done now.”

Brian Sullivan, President of the Nassau County Correction Officers Benevolent Association commented, “My organization has been against the wholesale reforms that were put in place since day 1. Can reforms be made? Yes. No one should languish in jail over a petty crime because of an inability to pay bail. But these reforms as enacted went too far. They place not only the public at risk, but also the offenders, who many times are drug addicted or suffer from mental illness. Those offenders are now simply released with no treatment options, This places public safety at risk of repeated victimization and the offenders with no option except continued bad/ criminal behaviors.”

"I have had numerous conversations with State Senator Martinez over the last few months regarding issues with bail reform. She has been fighting for amendments to this legislation and asking the tough questions of her colleagues and key stakeholders to ensure that New York gets it right. Public Safety is always at the forefront of her work, and I believe Senator Martinez's bill to ensure judges have sentencing discretion is the right way forward," said Suffolk County Sheriff Errol Toulon.

Fran Cohen, Animal Advocate from Almost Home stated, " I commend Senator Martinez for this proposed legislation. This is a very necessary step towards amending this flawed law. We need to protect all victims, including our furry friends. The animals are the voiceless, and they need to be protected and spoken for, Thank you to Senator Martinez for always speaking for the animals and working to protect the victims."

Senator Monica R. Martinez stated: "From day one, I have been vocal about my opposition to the current bail reform law as it is written. I am making this clear to the residents of the Third Senatorial District and the people of the State of New York today- if I cannot convince my colleagues to come together and work alongside law enforcement agencies, District Attorneys, Defense Attorneys, and victim advocates, to ensure that the best interest of the public is served - I will vote NAY on the budget. We need to either pass a stand alone bill that creates a real acceptable change to the current law, or I call on my colleagues to demand the Governor to place a bill amending bail reform in the budget, as it was last year.

I am asking my colleagues, as representatives of the State of New York, to work alongside both sides of the aisle, draft a smart and reasonable piece of legislation that will protect the safety of all. One that will protect our communities, our victims, our children and the offenders, who very well may need help themselves."

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