



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Alessandra Biaggi

STATE SENATOR ALESSANDRA BIAGGI ISSUES STATEMENT ON THE PASSAGE OF BILL TO REPEAL THE 50-A EXEMPTION

ALESSANDRA BIAGGI June 9, 2020

ALBANY, NY – Today the New York State Senate passed Senator Jamaal Bailey’s bill S8496 to repeal the 50-a exemption of the New York State Civil Rights Law. This exemption was adopted in 1976 by the Legislature, permitting law enforcement officers to refuse disclosure of “personnel records used to evaluate performance toward continued employment or promotion.” It has allowed members of law enforcement to get away with biased and violent behavior towards communities of color for decades.

State Senator Alessandra Biaggi (D-Bronx/Westchester) issued the following statement:

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Today’s vote is a testament to the fierce resolve and persistence of Senator Jamaal Bailey, the family members of loved ones lost to police brutality, reform advocates, and the tens of thousands of New Yorkers filling our streets, calling for an end to police violence in our state.

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For nearly fifty years, the 50-a exemption has shielded the truth that lies right before our eyes – systemic violence and racism against Black and Brown communities at the hands of law enforcement. It has allowed officers who are sworn to protect the public, evade responsibility for misconduct. It has emboldened officers to become repeat offenders of abusive behavior that has murdered loved ones and destroyed families. And it has allowed those who want to turn a blind eye to injustice, to do just that.

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As the granddaughter of one of the most decorated police officers in NYPD history, I know and honor the sacrifices officers make in service to our communities. But I also understand the institutional systems of oppression within law enforcement that must be addressed by creating full transparency and meaningful accountability. By repealing the 50-a exemption, law enforcement agencies will no longer be able to hide from the ugly truth. They will be forced to reckon with what it really means to serve and protect the people of New York.

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We can never bring back George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Ramarley Graham, Amadou Diallo, Andrew Kears, Eric Garner, or the countless other lives lost at the hands of law enforcement. Nor will we ever be able to erase the new and generational trauma inflicted by discriminatory policing in communities of color. Today we take the first step towards building trust and transforming the way we approach public safety in our communities. Because without transparency, there is no accountability – and without accountability, there will never be justice. No justice, no peace. Know justice, know peace.

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RELATED LEGISLATION

2019-S8496

- 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
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Relates to the disclosure of law enforcement disciplinary records; and to repeal section 50-a of the civil rights law relating thereto

June 06, 2020

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by [Jamaal T. Bailey](#)

Do you support this bill?
