



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

Senator Montgomery's Proximity Bill Awaits the Governor's Signature

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY August 4, 2020

| ISSUE: [CLOSE TO HOME, SENATOR MONTGOMERY'S PROXIMITY BILL \(APRIL'S LAW\)](#)

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The Proximity Bill (April's Bill) **S724A Montgomery/A6710 Rozic** would require the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) to provide consideration of, where practicable, the current residence of the children of the incarcerated individual at the stage when the placement determination is made.

Over 100,000 children have a parent incarcerated in one of New York's prisons. Since prisons are located all over the state, travel is a major barrier for families to visit. These facilities are many hours away and most families have to take the bus. Consistent in-person visitation is the single most important factor in whether a family will reunite after a prison term. It reduces the strain of separation on everyone involved and lowers the chances of recidivism.

In 2011, Senator Montgomery met with three young people from the Osborne Association's Youth Action Council whose parents were incarcerated. Each young person shared their

personal experiences with the Senator and suggested reforms to the criminal justice system. From that meeting, the Senator introduced legislation to address each of their concerns and named them Ashley's Bill, April's Bill and Raymond's Bill. In 2014, Ashley's Bill was signed into law to increase access to visitation at correctional facilities. Last week, April's Bill passed both houses and awaits the Governor's signature. Raymond's Bill to institute child sensitive arrest policies is in committee.

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These bills reflect the fact that the children of people who are incarcerated are deeply affected by their parent's absence and we need to pay more attention to their issues as it relates to the impact of mass incarceration on families," said State Senator Velmanette Montgomery. "I am so proud of Ashley, April and Raymond for sharing their pain in concrete terms and suggesting ways in which we can make the system better based on their experiences."

"I am so happy that the bill Senator Montgomery named after me is finally moving to become a law. So many kids have parents incarcerated far away. When my mom was incarcerated, it was so hard to visit her. I'd had her in my life my whole life, I was used to her being with me, and now I couldn't see her. We're not even asking for our parents to be within arms reach, but within reach at all. I hope the Governor signs this bill into law- I don't want other kids to go through what I went to when I couldn't get to my mom." **Alonicha (April) Triana, graduate of the Osborne Association's Youth Action Council.**

To read the full article, click [here](#).

RELATED LEGISLATION

2019-S724

- 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
-

Requires the department of corrections and community supervision to place incarcerated parents at correctional institutions closest to their children's home

January 08, 2019

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Velmanette Montgomery**

Do you support this bill?
