



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

## Sen. Jen Metzger Introduces New Legislation Requiring Domestic Violence Training by Judges and Court Clerks

JEN METZGER October 29, 2020

| ISSUE: **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS, INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE, SURVIVOR SUPPORT**



**Hudson Valley and Catskills, NY...** Senator Jen Metzger (SD-42) today announced the introduction of a new bill ([S8954A](#)) to require every judge, justice, and court clerk who handles matrimonial, family court, and criminal matters in New York State to attend domestic violence training as part of their mandatory judicial training and education requirements. The ten-hour training must be fulfilled every two years and be approved by the chief administrator of the courts. About half of the states in the country require similar

training and education.

“With domestic violence training, judges, justices, and clerks are better able to recognize signs of domestic violence in matrimonial, criminal, and other types of cases before them, and therefore better equipped to protect those most vulnerable to such abuse," **said Senator Jen Metzger.** "The tragic reality is that one in four women will experience severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime, and elevating awareness and understanding in our judiciary system will improve outcomes for survivors and will help save lives.”

In the 2019 legislative session, Senator Metzger was able to secure \$60,000 through the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) for Safe Homes of Orange County, now known as Fearless!, to support their vital services in Orange and Sullivan counties to victims of domestic violence. Additionally, Metzger secured \$24,000 for Legal Services of the Hudson Valley for legal assistance to victims of domestic violence, whose cases account for a third of the organization's caseload.

**Kellyann Kostyal-Larrier, Executive Director of Fearless!** said, “Victims of domestic violence and their children often have to rely on criminal and civil justice systems to provide protection and relief from their abusers. I’m grateful Senator Metzger understands that domestic violence is complex and training and ongoing skill development are required to properly identify and recognize abusers and the tactics they use. Judges are in a unique position to significantly impact people’s lives. Judges who lack the understanding of domestic violence and do not take advantage of ongoing training risk making life altering decisions from the bench that can have generational impact.”

**Joan Gerhardt, Director of Public Policy and Advocacy at the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence** said, “Judges play a crucial role in helping to end intimate partner violence

both in the courtroom and in their communities. It is therefore critical to enhance their understanding of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse, and equip them with the tools they need to better support victims of abuse. We greatly appreciate Senator Metzger's focus on this issue and look forward to working with her and the Legislature to get this important measure signed into law."

*Jen Metzger represents the 42nd Senate District, which includes all of Sullivan County and parts of Delaware, Orange, and Ulster Counties. Senator Metzger serves as Chair of the Agriculture Committee and sits on the Environmental Conservation, Education, Health, Energy and Telecommunications, Local Government, Women's Issues, Domestic Animal Welfare, and Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Committees.*

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2019-S8954A**

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- 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 requiring certain judges and court clerks to attend a program approved by the chief administrator of the courts addressing issues relating to domestic violence every two years

September 02, 2020

In Senate Committee [Rules](#)

Sponsored by [Jen Metzger](#)

Do you support this bill?