



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

## O'Mara, Senate GOP colleagues advance parole reform that 'puts crime victims and safe communities first'

THOMAS F. O'MARA June 1, 2021

| ISSUE: **PAROLE REFORM**



Enough is enough and we need to stand up, speak out, and fight against the pro-criminality mentality that keeps going too far in New York State.

**Albany, N.Y., June 1**—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) joined Senate Republican colleagues at a Capitol news conference this afternoon to reject pro-criminal policies being pushed by the Legislature's Democrat majorities and to advance a package of parole reform legislation that O'Mara and his colleagues say put crime victims and safe communities first.

O'Mara said, "Enough is enough and we need to stand up, speak out, and fight against the pro-criminality mentality that keeps going too far in New York State. The Democrat supermajorities in control of the State Legislature show no signs of letting up in their push for policies that keep putting more and more cop killers, child murderers, and other violent criminals back into society. Over the past two years, this state's Parole Board has shown a dangerous and disturbing habit of showing no concern whatsoever for crime victims and their families and loved ones. We should be advancing legislation to make it harder, not easier, for the Parole Board to favor the release of violent criminals who belong behind bars. We need to enact legislation that puts crime victims and safe communities first."

The Senate GOP's parole reform package includes legislation to:

- > require that all victim impact statements in New York State be video recorded and require that the members of the parole board review all relevant victim impact statements prior to the conduct of a parole hearing;
- > provide that any person interested in the grant or denial of discretionary release shall have the right to submit a written statement of views in support of or in opposition to the granting of discretionary release, which the parole board may consider;
- > require that all comments and testimony made by a third party either in support or opposition in a parole hearing shall be considered when coming to a decision;
- > allow for the removal of members of the state board of parole by a majority vote in the Senate and the Assembly;
- > authorize the state board of parole to require a violent felony offender to serve his or her maximum term, if, by clear and convincing evidence, release would pose an imminent threat to society;

> increase from 24 to 60 months, the time for which reconsideration for parole for a violent felony offense shall be determined; and

> require unanimous agreement by the parole board to release an inmate on parole.

Since 2017, the state Parole Board has released at least 20 cop-killers, according to the Police Benevolent Association of New York.

Under Democratic proposal currently under consideration by legislative leaders, including so-called “Elder Parole” and the “Fair and Timely Parole Act,” even more notorious cop-killers would be eligible for release, according to O’Mara and other members of the Senate Republican conference.