



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

BILL SUPPORTED BY SERINO WOULD IMPROVE RESPONSE TO PREVENT ELDER ABUSE

SUSAN SERINO June 3, 2021

| ISSUE: **ELDER ABUSE**



ALBANY, NY –Senator Sue Serino announced today that a bill she co-sponsors to more effectively prevent elder abuse and hold perpetrators accountable passed in the State Senate this week.

While elder abuse is chronically underreported and under prosecuted, it is estimated that nearly 300,000 New York seniors fall victim to some form of elder abuse each year. According

to recent reports, elder financial exploitation is the most common form of abuse, costing American seniors billions of dollars annually. The bill co-sponsored by Senator Serino would codify the highly successful Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Team (E-MDT) Program within the State Office for the Aging, a move that will further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of a program that works holistically to prevent abuse, return stolen funds and empower New York's seniors. To date, E-MDT, have secured almost \$2 million in court-ordered restitution for financial abuse victims.

“Since taking office, protecting vulnerable seniors from elder abuse and financial exploitation has been one of my top priorities, and the Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Teams play a critical role in that effort as they work tirelessly to investigate, intervene and prevent abuse,” said Senator Serino. “The E-MDTs have proven to be incredibly successful, and with the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, their work has never been more important. I am proud to have done my part to help expand this highly successful program over the years, and I look forward to seeing all they are able to accomplish when this bill becomes law.”

Recently, local organizations that work with the E-MDTs raised potential legal issues around the sharing of victim information during case discussions in which team members come from various industries, especially in light of the recent changes made to New York State's discovery laws. The changes created uncertainties that make it difficult for local E-MDT coordinators to recruit and train new members that represent organizations like county Adult Protective Services, District Attorney's offices, law enforcement, and more. The bill would address these concerns by giving the program the statutory authority it needs to seamlessly continue its important work.

The E-MDT Program is overseen upstate by Lifespan of Greater Rochester. To learn more about the program, [please click here](#).

The bill was sponsored in the Senate by Senator Roxanne Persaud, Chair of the Senate's Committee on Social Services, and it must pass in the Assembly and be signed by the

Governor before it can become law.

Senator Serino is the Ranking Member of the Senate's Committee on Aging.