



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

Senator Borrello Bill Will Cover K-9 Officer Health Costs

GEORGE M. BORRELLO April 25, 2022

| ISSUE: **PROTECTING LAW ENFORCEMENT, LAW ENFORCEMENT, CRIME**



ALBANY – A bill introduced by Sen. George Borrello ([S.7048](#)) to reimburse municipalities and law enforcement agencies for canine officer health costs has passed the New York State Senate Codes Committee.

The legislation, the Canine Officer Health Monitoring Fund, would also establish a system to collect canine officer health data.

“The national Officer Down Memorial Page lists 357 canine officers killed in the line of duty. Gunshot wounds are listed as the most common cause of death,” Sen. Borrello said. “These highly trained canine officers serve side-by-side with their fellow law enforcement officers and face the same risks. Canine officers provide invaluable service to their communities including explosive detection, drug detection and search and rescue.

“In my own district, the late Jamestown Police Department K9 Mitchell was stabbed under the jaw and grievously wounded by a homicide suspect in 2016. Only the quick, lifesaving action of his handler and treatment at an animal hospital saved his life. Mitchell returned to duty, but sadly passed away in February from cancer.”

In 2017, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration warned law enforcement agencies that canine officers on drug detection duty face injury and death by the inhalation of synthetic opioids such as fentanyl.

“Because they are considered the property/personnel of their department or handler, canine officer health care isn’t covered and no large-scale studies to improve the health and safety of canine officers exists,” Sen. Borrello said. “This legislation will remedy that oversight. We have a responsibility to provide canine officers and their agencies with the support they need as part of the overall dedication we have for those who serve.”

###