



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Edward A. Rath III

Senator Rath's May Column

EDWARD A. RATH III May 31, 2022

| ISSUE: **LEGISLATION, HATE CRIMES**

unfolded on Saturday, May 14, are devastating to our Western New York community. Something that we hoped would never occur in our backyards, has become a devastating reality – and has become all too commonplace in our nation.

I share my deepest condolences with the families, loved ones, and the Buffalo community, I also want to send a message that this type of hatred and racism will not be tolerated.

While this is an extremely complex issue, I recognize that it will not be solved by one singular piece of legislation. However, I want to highlight some important pieces of legislation that take



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isolation that I want to highlight is Senate Bill S.7600, which prohibits cyberbullying. The internet has become a dangerous place, especially for our children who are vulnerable. We must do all we can to prevent this predatory, unsafe behavior.

I know this is just the start, but these bills will help to prosecute those who spread hate and violence and send the message that it will not be tolerated in our state. I am hopeful that the hyper-partisan rhetoric will be put to the wayside, and we can work together to find real, meaningful solutions that ad-

dress the root causes of these issues plaguing our communities.

Recognizing the importance of mental

There has been much happening in Albany surrounding taxes, our state budget, and the typical business that runs our State. However, I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to remember our fellow Western New Yorkers who tragically lost their lives. The events that unfolded on Saturday, May 14th are devastating to our Western New York Community. Something we hoped would never be able to occur in our backyards but has become all too commonplace in our Nation.

I share my deepest condolences with the families, loved ones, and the Buffalo community, I also want to send a message that this type of hatred and racism will not be tolerated.

While this is an extremely complex issue, I recognize that it will not be solved by one singular piece of legislation. However, I want to highlight some important pieces of legislation that take aim at those who commit hate crimes and spread hatred. Senate Bill 124, would allow for statements that a defendant made previously to be used when a hate crime is committed, allowing for a pattern to be shown.

Additionally, I co-sponsor legislation (S.4563) that would add anti-Semitism to the human rights law in New York, making acts of anti-Semitism a hate crime. Providing the criminal justice system, with the tools they need to be able to hold those who commit heinous acts accountable is of the utmost importance, in doing so, we are sending the message that New York will not tolerate any form of hatred.

Another important piece of legislation that I want to highlight is Senate Bill S.7600, which prohibits cyber-bullying. The internet has become a dangerous place, especially for our children who are vulnerable. We must do all we can to prevent this predatory, unsafe behavior.

I know this is just the start, but these bills will help to prosecute those who spread hate and violence and send the message that it will not be tolerated in our State. I am hopeful that the hyper-partisan rhetoric will be put to the wayside, and we can work together to find real, meaningful solutions that address the root causes of these issues plaguing our communities.

Recognizing the importance of mental health is critical. May is mental health awareness month. If you or someone you know is struggling, there are resources available. For more information, visit <https://omh.ny.gov/>.

As always, be sure to stay up to date and follow me on Facebook at [fb.com/SenatorEdRath](https://www.facebook.com/SenatorEdRath).