



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## Senator Lanza Joins Senate and Assembly Republicans To Introduce Amendment To Establish A Recall Process For District Attorneys

ANDREW J. LANZA June 8, 2022



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**Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt, Assembly Republican Leader Will Barclaym Deputy Republican Leader Andrew Lanza** and **Assemblyman Michael Tannousis** today introduced a **constitutional amendment (S.9484)** to establish recall elections for District Attorneys who refuse to enforce the law and champion soft-on-crime policies that are exacerbating a rise in violent crime throughout New York State.

“Any district attorney who fails to make crime victims their number one priority has no business serving the public. Their job is to enforce the law and prosecute those who break it. This disturbing trend of progressive, soft-on-crime District Attorneys – including Manhattan DA Alvin Bragg here in New York – refusing to prosecute crime has got to stop. If Governor Hochul won’t do the right thing, and remove him from office, New Yorkers should have the power to do so on their own,” **said Senate Republican Leader Ortt.**

“Public prosecutors who turn a blind eye to crime completely undermine the quality of life people are able to experience. District Attorneys have a duty to uphold the law and protect the community, two very basic responsibilities that are unfortunately being ignored with greater frequency. DAs who choose to act as political activists once they take office need to be held accountable. San Francisco was able to remove an official who put his own woke agenda ahead of the public’s best interest. We need to apply the same standard and have the same option here in New York,” **said Assembly Republican Leader Barclay.**

“District Attorneys are entrusted with the constitutional responsibility to enforce the criminal law which is essential to the securement of public safety. New York citizens should have the right to remove any DA who intentionally violates that oath,” **said Senator Lanza.**

“The duty of a district attorney demands the faithful execution of criminal prosecution in order to keep the public safe and seek justice for victims. When a DA refuses to carry out their duties to the detriment of the public, then that individual must be removed and

replaced with someone willing to do the job. The horrific rise in crime we have seen in New York City and throughout the state directly correlates to weak laws and even weaker enforcement and prosecution. The ability to recall prosecutors who refuse to prosecute criminals offers New Yorkers a solution to these obvious failures we've seen in the system," **said Assemblyman Michael Tannousis, a former Assistant District Attorney in the Bronx.**

Earlier this week, **San Francisco voters voted to recall** soft-on-crime District Attorney Chesa Boudin after drastic increases in crime throughout the city. Progressive Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg has followed a **similar soft-on-crime policy**, despite the increase in violent crime throughout New York City.

New York State does not currently have recall elections, but the Governor has the authority to remove District Attorneys who fail to do their jobs and enforce the law. Earlier this year, Legislative Republicans urged Governor Hochul to remove DA Bragg for instituting a policy urging prosecutors to avoid seeking jail time for all but the most serious crimes.

Under the proposed amendment, a recall could be initiated by a petition delivered to the State Board of Elections which alleges the reason for recall which is signed by voters within the county equal to twenty percent of the last vote for the District Attorney. An election to determine whether to recall the District Attorney would be held between 60 and 80 days from the date of certification of sufficient signatures by the State Board of Elections.

Senate Republicans have supported similar **legislation, sponsored by Senator Joseph Griffo**, to institute recall elections for all statewide elected officials.

"Public officials are elected to serve the public – if they fail in their responsibilities, New Yorkers deserve the opportunity to fire them," **concluded Leader Ortt.**