



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham Reintroduces Bills in Recognition of Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

PETE HARCKHAM January 12, 2023

| ISSUE: **SENATOR HARCKHAM. SD40, LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION; PUBLIC SAFETY, NYS INTELLIGENCE CENTER**



Albany, NY – In recognition of Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, New York State Senator Pete Harckham announced today that he will be reintroducing two important bills in the new Senate session.

Chief among these bills is one that requires the New York State Police to have a local liaison within the New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC) to alert municipalities of domestic extremism and terrorism threats, including those categorized as cyber threats. The second bill seeks to exclude elected or appointed sheriffs and appointed undersheriffs from completing certain training requirements before they begin their respective roles in office. This will remedy an oversight in the enacted Professional Policing Act of 2020

that removed police powers from these elected and appointed offices.

“In times of danger or unfolding crisis, our law enforcement professionals need to have access to all of the information and intelligence possible to safeguard our communities,” said Harckham. “Only by having a dedicated line of communication to our state’s intelligence operations will our local police authorities be able to plan and respond accordingly.”

In response to the May 2022 mass shooting in Buffalo, NY, Governor Kathy Hochul announced a much-needed expansion for the NYSIC. Prior to this tragic event, the intelligence center had only one analyst monitoring social media for potential threats statewide. The newly expanded NYSIC studies domestic terrorism and extremism with state-of-the-art technology to allow analysts to monitor the “dark web” and other internet and social media platforms known to be used by perpetrators of extremist attacks.

To support and enhance the NYSIC, though, Harckham emphasized the need for his bill, [S.9582](#), and pointed out that proper communication should exist with our local law enforcement to best deal with signs of potential threats. Local law enforcement departments, however, are not equipped with the adequate resources to investigate and respond to complaints of hate speech on social media platforms, or other dark web activities.

“While municipalities need to be alerted of potential threats to best prepare, we must also allow them to raise any virtual threats to the attention of the state intelligence center,” said Harckham. “By establishing a local liaison, we can cement this relationship between the state and local municipalities.”

As for the second bill, [S.9264](#), individuals elected sheriff and appointed undersheriff historically have been granted police officer powers by virtue of simply holding the office. This was the case since the formal inception of the Office of Sheriff was instituted via the New York State Constitution; and it remained so even after the adoption of more formal training requirements for police officers as our police departments and law enforcement agencies evolved and modernized throughout the last century.

But without apparent explanation or justification, this consideration for the Office of Sheriff was stricken from the General Municipal Law as part of the larger Professional Policing Act of 2020.

“In New York, the unique nature of our elected sheriffs justifies a return to the former legal arrangement with regards to inherent police powers that are attached to this important public servant,” said Harckham.

Law Enforcement Appreciation Day is a commemoration started in 2015 to recognize police officers and other law enforcement professionals for their service and acknowledge their efforts to protect lives and uphold the law. To view a video of Harckham’s comments regarding Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, click [here](#).