



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Steven D. Rhoads

SENATE & ASSEMBLY REPUBLICANS UNVEIL PLAN TO CREATE A SAFER NY

STEVEN D. RHOADS January 25, 2023

| ISSUE: **SAFER NY**



ALBANY, NY – Senator Tom O’Mara and Assembly Republican Leader Will Barclay, along with Senator Alexis Weik, Assemblyman Robert Smullen, members of law enforcement, victims’ advocates, and members of the Senate and Assembly Republican Conferences today unveiled a legislative package to Create a Safer New York. In contrast with Albany One Party Rule’s disastrous pro-criminal “reforms,” these comprehensive policy solutions would support our brave members of law enforcement, fix the state’s broken criminal justice

system, crack down on illegal gun crime, and protect victims and innocent New Yorkers.

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“Voters rejected Albany’s radical agenda that has endangered our police and the public they are sworn to protect. Our comprehensive plan restores public safety with common-sense reforms that roll back bail and discovery laws and protects the rights of the victims of crime, instead of those that commit them,” said Senator Steven Rhoads, SD 5th.

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“As crime is on the rise throughout New York State, our Democratic colleagues in the Legislature continue to double-down on more soft-on-crime policies that will put our communities at greater risk. Public safety remains a top priority for Senate Republicans, and we will continue to advocate for common-sense proposals to support law enforcement, put victims over criminals, and end the revolving door of our criminal justice system. We cannot have a strong, healthy state without public safety,” said Senate Republican Leader Rob Ort.

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“New Yorkers are not adequately protected under current state law. Qualified judges are prohibited from using basic, common-sense assessments of threat levels posed by the individuals coming before them, and the results have been critically disastrous. We have seen the full measure of what these policies are doing to our communities, and it is abundantly clear we must drastically change course now, before the situation deteriorates any further,” said Assembly Republican Leader Will Barclay.

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“It is time to give discretion back to the judges and keep violent criminals off our streets. If this had happened before, my dad would be with us today. Although nothing will change for my family, I am hoping to save other families from the trauma and grief that we have

experienced,” said Tammy Patrick, daughter of murder victim John Lee.

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“Every day we hear of another blanket release mandate for even the most violent of criminals. We hear how they are deserving of the second chance at life they robbed our families of. But I have yet to hear how those that are being released back into society have been rehabilitated. Instead of issuing these blanket release mandates Governor Kathy Hochul and her majority should be focusing on investing in the rehabilitation of the nonviolent offenders to prevent victimization in the first place, before it is too late for families like ours and the offenders themselves. The current revolving door system they have created clearly is not working,” said Jennifer Harrison, Founder of Victims’ Rights NY.

To provide much-needed support to law enforcement, fix the state’s broken criminal justice system, crack down on illegal gun crime, and protect victims and innocent New Yorkers, Republicans proposed:

Support Law Enforcement

- Creating the SAFER Communities Grant Program to invest in critical investigatory and prosecutorial resources designed to increase case clearance rates for homicide and gun crimes;
- Repealing HALT to protect our corrections officers; and
- Allowing the use of familial DNA to give law enforcement more investigatory tools.

Fix the Broken Criminal Justice System

- Rolling back disastrous bail and discovery laws, and providing for judicial discretion to stop the revolving door in our criminal justice system;
- Opposing soft-on-crime policies being advanced by the Democratic Majorities, including the so-called “Clean Slate” Act, “Elder Parole,” and others; and
- Increasing penalties for habitual repeat offenders who commit crimes that harm New Yorkers’ quality of life.

Crack Down on Illegal Gun Crime

- Reducing the use of illegal firearms with increased funding for gun interdiction efforts;
- Increasing penalties for crimes committed with stolen firearms, and mandatory consecutive sentencing for crimes involving illegal firearms; and
- Making any misdemeanor or felony offense involving an illegal firearm bail eligible, and amending Raise the Age to ensure 16- and 17-year-olds charged with certain gun or gang-related crimes are prosecuted as adults.

Protect Victims and Innocent New Yorkers

- Restricting the release of identifying information in certain cases, and putting in place policies to protect victims’ rights during parole process;
- Increasing the caps on Office of Victim Services reimbursements for crime victims, and investing in victim support programs; and
- Authorizing judges to set lifetime orders of protection for certain crimes, such as violent and domestic violence felonies.

The package outlined today is the first in a series of comprehensive proposals that will be put forth by the Republican Conferences this session in order to reduce crime, strengthen public safety, and protect victims and innocent, law-abiding New Yorkers.

Earlier this month, Senate Republicans unveiled the “[Rescue New York](#)” 2023 Legislative Agenda, including the creation of a Safer New York. Partly outlined today, the Republican agenda would:

- Restore common sense to our criminal justice system to prevent crime and protect New Yorkers;
- Increase efforts and investments to end the opioid and mental health epidemics; and
- Support and protect our seniors and other vulnerable New Yorkers.

The full press conference can be viewed [here](#).