



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Walczyk

## Senator Walczyk Fights to Deliver Win for Schools, Law Enforcement, and Public Safety with Anti-Swatting Bill

MARK WALCZYK April 5, 2023

| ISSUE: **SWATTING, PUBLIC SAFETY**



Since 2019, Senator Mark Walczyk has been a part of legislation to make the act of “Swatting” a Class E Felony. This term references an attempt to bring about a large dispatch of heavily armed law enforcement to a predetermined address or location. After being notified of a constituent who was displaced from their residence 2 times in 3 days with guns drawn from police and was swatted 23 times in a month and a half, the Assemblyman at the time knew he had to introduce legislation to help deter this harmful act. Alongside Senator Patty

Ritchie, they introduced their first anti-swatting legislation, to heighten the penalty for the act to a Class E Felony.

Today, as we are experiencing a high frequency of swatting calls across the North Country, Senator Mark Walczyk is continuing to champion this legislation and currently has this bill introduced in the Senate. Along with co-sponsors, Senator Jim Tedisco and Senator Dean Murray, and sponsor of the bill in the Assembly, Assemblyman Scott Gray, this legislation will strongly increase the penalty for these harmful acts and in turn deter swatting from occurring. Passing this bill will be a huge win for public schools who have witnessed an onslaught of these attacks in recent weeks, along with local law enforcement who have had to take resources away from the public in order to respond in full strength to these terrifying calls.

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*“Heightened penalties on these egregious acts will open up tools for law enforcement to gather and prosecute the bad actors. I look forward to working with the Governor and partners in the Senate and the Assembly to finally get this bill done,” said Walczyk.*

“With these terror calls, it’s becoming open season on spreading fear, stress, anxiety, and depression throughout our vulnerable student bodies as well as staff and their families. These contacts threatening violence in our schools is another form of terrorism which cannot be allowed to stand,” said Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C-44th Senate District).

"There have been over 50 cases of "Swatting", (false reports of shooting incidents that result in SWAT teams being deployed) at school districts all across the state, including districts on Long Island. Let me be clear, "Swatting" is not funny and it's not cool... but it is dangerous

and illegal. That is why I'm proud to team with my colleagues, Senators Walczyk and Tedisco, to introduce legislation to give police the tools they need to crack down on this irresponsible and dangerous trend", said NYS Senator Dean Murray, 3rd District.