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Senator Murray Introduces Mask Law Focusing on Penal Law Amendment

(Patchogue, NY) – Masks and face coverings have become a very contentious topic lately. Regardless of how necessary they were or are to prevent illness, we know that wearing a face covering while perpetrating a crime has become more common and has given criminals a greater sense of empowerment to commit those crimes.

Today, New York State Senator Dean Murray (R,C - East Patchogue), introduced legislation in the State Senate that would amend the penal law by establishing a new crime of aggravated concealment of identity (S.9891). This bill will elevate existing penalties for misdemeanors and felonies by one degree when evidence shows the perpetrator of an illegal act commits such offenses while disguised using a mask or face covering.

“I know there has been quite a bit of controversy over when and where people have the "right" to wear a face covering or mask, but what I'm trying to make clear with this bill is that NO ONE has the right to conceal his or her identity for the purpose of committing a crime," said NYS Senator Dean Murray, 3rd District. "I'm hoping this legislation will serve as a deterrent to those thinking of hiding their face in order to commit anonymous crimes and will allow victims to seek justice when hurt by criminals who are emboldened by the current lack of consequences in state law,” said Senator Murray.

Currently no prohibition in state law or mechanism exists to hold people accountable for the menacing behavior of intentional concealment of identity during a criminal act. “This bill will fill the gap in state law,” stated Senator Murray.

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