

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
CITIES 2

COMMITTEE MEMBER

AGING
ALCOHOLISM AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE
CRIME VICTIMS, CRIME AND CORRECTION
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS

**THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK**



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October 31, 2024

Dear Governor Hochul and Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins:

As lawmakers representing parts or all of Dutchess County, we are acutely aware of the trauma our community has experienced. As you may know, Melanie Chianese, a Town of Wappinger resident, had her life tragically taken in a senseless act of violence by her mother's ex-boyfriend in 2022. Since then, her family has continued to face unimaginable pain, as her killer has sent harassing letters from prison. "Killing Melanie wasn't enough. He [Melanie's assailant] is continuing to terrorize the family and things need to change. The state needs to enact Melanie's Law so no other family will experience the tragedy we live with every day," a member of Melanie's family told a local news outlet at the time.

Legislation was passed by the state legislature in May, offering critical protections for families like the Chianeses. Each day that passes without the protections of Melanie's Law in place revives the nightmare for the Chianese family and creates continued vulnerability for other women, children, and domestic abuse survivors across the state who may be at risk. In short, the decision to delay implementing this legislation into the laws of our state is unconscionable and a threat to public safety. We respectfully urge that this legislation be enacted swiftly to prevent further harm and to provide the peace of mind these families deserve.

As Domestic Violence Awareness Month draws to a close, we are reminded of our collaborative responsibility to stand with survivors and ensure that their voices are heard. Signing Melanie's Law would send a clear message of support to the countless New Yorkers who live in fear of domestic violence. According to Fearless Hudson Valley, Inc., every 24 minutes someone is raped, assaulted or stalked by an intimate partner. The complacency of this state government in the face of overwhelming statistical evidence to the contrary is threatening our community with another tragedy, and this legislation is a vital step toward providing them with the safety and security they need.

We strongly encourage you to act immediately and sign Melanie's Law without further delay. By doing so, you will reaffirm the state's commitment to protecting its most vulnerable residents.

The time is always right to do the right thing. Thank you for your timely attention to this request.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Robert G. Rolison in black ink.

Robert G. Rolison
New York State Senate
39th District

Handwritten signature of Anil "AJ" Beephan in black ink.

Anil "AJ" Beephan
NYS Assemblymember
105th District

Handwritten signature of Sue Serino in black ink.

Sue Serino
Dutchess County Executive

