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NYS SENATORS MURRAY, WALCZYK AND TEDISCO LOOK TO INCREASE PENALTIES FOR "SWATTING"

A recent rash of "Swatting" incidents at school districts is spreading both fear and concern across NY State. The term "swatting" refers to an attempt to bring a large dispatch of heavily armed law enforcement to a predetermined address or location as a result of a phoned in or e-mailed threat of a shooting or bombing. While some may think it's a harmless prank, it's actually very serious and dangerous. This is why NYS Senators Dean Murray (R,C - 3rd District), Mark Walczyk (R,C - 49th District) and Jim Tedisco (R,C - 44th District) are pushing for passage of their bill, (S.4283) that will increase the penalty for the act, from a Class A misdemeanor (up to 1 year in jail) to a Class E felony (1.5 to 4 years in state prison).

"There have been over 50 cases of "Swatting", 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... it is dangerous and illegal. That is why I'm proud to team with my colleagues, Senator Walczyk and Senator 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 Senate District.

Law enforcement officials agree. "Faking threats to a school, religious institution or any public place is not a laughing matter. These 'swatting' incidents are growing more and more common, and they waste public safety resources and misdirect law enforcement personnel that could be saving lives. I applaud this bill which aims to increase penalties for falsely reporting incidents with the malintent to mislead law enforcement," said Suffolk County Sheriff Errol D. Toulon, Jr.

"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 Senator Mark Walczyk, 49th Senate District.

"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).

Fortunately, all of the recent incidents have been investigated and found to be non-credible.

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