

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 22, 2022
FOR MORE INFORMATION: 315-568-9816

Senator Helming Introduces Legislation to Protect Competitive Shooting Sports

Senator Pam Helming has introduced legislation (S.9530) to protect the longstanding tradition of shooting sports in New York State. The bill would clarify language in the firearm legislation enacted on July 1 that does not expressly exempt competitive shooting sports events, often held at sportsmen’s clubs, as “sensitive locations.”

Senator Helming’s bill would make clear in state law that firearms are still permitted to be used at shooting sports venues and programs, including school-approved skeet, trap or clay target shooting teams, and organizations such as sportsmen’s clubs, youth clubs and scouting camps.

“Shooting sports programs and competitions are conducted safely and responsibly, with applicable training and education. They should be allowed to operate as they always have—safely and successfully. The language in our laws matter—and the language in the law that takes effect September 1 unfairly puts these programs at risk. Participation in these sports is growing, especially in our rural areas. We must amend the law immediately, so our student-athletes are able to compete and enjoy the educational and personal benefits of these sports,” said **Senator Pam Helming**.

The New York State High School Clay Target League is among the organizations expressing concern that state law puts these programs and participants at risk of liability.

“On behalf of the thousands of youth clay target shooting sport enthusiasts and their families, the New York State High School Clay Target League fully supports amending the penal law to allow sport shooting and target practice facilities to be exempt from being designated as a sensitive location. We want to thank Senator Helming and all supporters of this amendment for their efforts to support one of New York’s fastest-growing high school sports,” said **John Nelson, President of the USA Clay Target League**.

“As the founder and coach of a local high school trap shooting team, I know how valuable this sport is to our student-athletes. Shooting sports teach students the important life lessons that any other sport does, including teamwork, responsibility, goal setting and additionally, safe firearms handling from properly trained instructors. It is a disgrace that Albany Democrats are singling out shooting sports and these student-athletes. I am proud to sponsor this new legislation to ensure that these sports can continue and to protect our way of life,” said **Assemblyman Jeff Gallahan**.

“When I first heard of the Governor’s plan to squash our way of life, my first thoughts were of my son who participates in his school’s trap shooting program and of the life skills of patience, respect and camaraderie that he and the countless other student-athletes are learning. It is policies like these that are causing our families, friends and neighbors to scratch their heads and pack their bags. I would like to thank Senator Helming and Assemblyman Gallahan for introducing this legislation to preserve our culture throughout upstate New York. I am proud to co-sponsor this legislation, because it is about more than trap shooting, it is about preserving our traditions and passing our legacies on to our children,” said **Assemblyman Brian Manktelow**.

“I participate in competitive skeet and sporting clays, two of the shooting sports. These sports have become increasingly popular in New York with high schools creating hundreds of teams across the state. It is important that our shooting sports be allowed to continue, particularly for our young people. The sports have long traditions in rural New York and participants learn how to safely and properly handle firearms. I am thankful Senator Helming and Assemblyman Gallahan are introducing this legislation to protect the future of shooting sports,” said **Assemblywoman Marjorie Byrnes**.

Constituents supporting this effort can [sign the petition](#) on Senator Helming’s website.

###