



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John C. Liu

# **Liu, Vanel, hail legislation to crack down on cyber extortion**

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Passage of Senate bill follows April ransomware attacks on the state legislature

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**Albany, NY** – NYS Senator John Liu and Assembly Member Clyde Vanel today announced their legislation to crack down on cyber extortion passed in the State Senate. Bill [S881](#)/ [A2301](#) was introduced in 2021, following reports indicating that \$415 million had been paid by victims of cyber extortion in New York. A more recent [report](#) by the State Comptroller in 2023 found New York’s ransomware and data breaches were third highest in the nation over the last six years with over \$775 million lost in 2022 alone.

The passage of the Senate bill comes on the heels of a malware attack on the New York State legislature in April that required the state to resort to printing budget bills on outdated backup computers. Although the attacks did not delay state budget negotiations, they demonstrated an urgent need to address the rise in cyber-related crimes.

The legislation would establish the crime of larceny by cyber extortion for those who install any type of malicious computer software on another’s computer that renders it inoperable or restricts access to the system or any data therein. The bill also applies to threats of extortion. Maximum penalties could carry a charge of up to 25 years.

**State Senator John Liu**, sponsor of [S881](#), stated, “Cyber extortionists disrupt every level of our society from individuals to businesses and even the highest levels of government. These malicious acts cause real harm ranging from financial losses to compromised personal safety. As we saw with the April ransomware attack on the state legislature, no one is immune to cyber attacks. The consequences for these crimes need to be clearly outlined in state law so that perpetrators face strict penalties.”

**State Assembly Member Clyde Vanel**, sponsor of [A2301](#), stated, “As cyber threats continue to evolve, it is imperative that our laws keep pace. This bill will provide prosecutors with the tools they need to bring to justice those who target the most vulnerable New Yorkers in malicious cyber extortion scams. We are sending a clear message: if you try to extort New Yorkers online, you will be met with the full force of the law.”

