



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Promotes Elder Abuse Awareness Month

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Senator Patrick Gallivan speaks at a news conference promoting elder abuse awareness and prevention.

Theme for 2024 is Building Strong Supports for Older Adults

Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C, Elma) joined federal, state, and local officials Thursday in marking World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD). The event is part of a month-long effort to promote an understanding of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue. The Western New York WEAAD campaign is a collaboration of New York State, the Erie County District Attorney's Office, the City of Buffalo, the Erie County Council on Elder Abuse, Live Well Erie County, and Center for Elder Law & Justice.

The theme of this year's campaign is "Building Strong Supports for Older Adults" by emphasizing the work and accomplishments of those who have laid the foundation for our local communities.

"No one in our community should live in fear of abuse or exploitation, especially our seniors," Senator Gallivan said. "We all have a responsibility to help spread awareness and increase knowledge on what to do if you suspect an elderly family member, friend or neighbor is a victim of physical, emotional, or financial abuse. We are fortunate to have agencies and organizations in our community to help seniors and those who care for them, and to have the support of law enforcement to go after perpetrators of such crimes. By working together, we can help ensure our elders live in peace, comfort, and security."

"The crime of elder abuse is complex, both because the perpetrators are often family members or those in positions of trust, and because factors such as isolation, cognitive impairments, and disabilities of survivors can make identification and intervention difficult," Karen Nicolson, CEO of Center for Elder Law & Justice said. "This is particularly true of financial exploitation, believed to be the most prevalent and least reported form of elder abuse. We are honored to have the support of so many leaders and partners in our region who bring awareness to the issues on elder abuse and help create a safer environment for older adults in our communities. Working together to spread awareness throughout our community allows us to increase the knowledge of others and help reach those who may be afraid to speak up."

The partner organizations involved are making a concerted effort to highlight the issue of elder abuse, and what resources are available to older adults. Thanks to Meals on Wheels and FeedMore of WNY, information will be included in meal deliveries during the month of June. Caring Cards are being collected from area school children to share with seniors at various locations. Any school or other organization that would like to participate in the Caring Cards Challenge can do so year-round, by contacting the Center for Elder Law & Justice. The organizations are also collaborating on a social media campaign throughout the month of June.