



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew Gounardes

Sen. Gounardes, AM González-Rojas Push for Internet-Age Protections for Stalking & Harassment

ANDREW GOUNARDES May 6, 2025

| ISSUE: **HARASSMENT, DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE, WORKER PROTECTIONS, SEXUAL HARASSMENT**



The CREEP Act would modernize New York's laws to account for the digital landscape where harassment now occurs.

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ALBANY, NY — New York State Senator Andrew Gounardes and Assembly Member Jessica González-Rojas joined other elected officials, advocates and impacted individuals at the New York State Capitol to call for the passage of The CREEP Act, a bill that would update protections for stalking and harassment victims in the age of cyberstalking, revenge porn, doxxing and deep fakes.

The Ceasing Repeated and Extremely Egregious Predatory (CREEP) Behavior Act ([S.3394/A.3226](#)), sponsored by Senator Gounardes and Assembly Member González-Rojas, follows the lead of 43 other states by creating a new anti-stalking order of protection through civil court that would allow courts to more quickly and easily protect victims of harassment both online and offline.

Family Court allows individuals to seek orders of protection from family members or intimate partners, but there's no civil remedy for those outside these categories. People harassed by former acquaintances, neighbors, co-workers, or strangers online often can't obtain protection until it is too late.

The CREEP Act [offers court-issued protection](#) to anyone facing harassment, threats, or stalking—regardless of their relationship to the perpetrator. This new order of protection would allow courts to more quickly and easily protect victims of digital harassment, provide faster support for victims without waiting for an arrest, and better protect those left behind by existing laws.

"Technology has transformed our lives, but in the era of cyberstalking, revenge porn and deep fakes, our laws haven't kept up," said **State Senator Andrew Gounardes**. "That means survivors of stalking and abuse are getting left behind. My CREEP Act would update our laws to create a new anti-stalking order of protection, enabling civil courts to more easily and quickly protect victims of harassment. New York is behind the curve here; 43 other states

have already taken similar steps. This commonsense policy modernizes New York's laws to account for the digital landscape where so much harassment now occurs, and ensures our neighbors and loved ones are protected both online and offline."

"As a survivor and lifelong advocate for survivors' justice, I am honored to stand alongside my colleagues and fellow advocates in pushing for stronger protections for New Yorkers through the CREEP Act," said **Assembly Member Jessica González-Rojas**. "Every year, hundreds of our neighbors suffer in silence as victims of stalking—an often-overlooked crime that can escalate to violence or even death. It is long past time to act. We must protect New Yorkers and hold stalkers accountable. I urge my colleagues in the legislature to pass the CREEP Act this session."

"Our laws must keep pace with the realities of digital harassment and stalking. Too many New Yorkers face threats from former acquaintances, neighbors, or strangers online and have no legal remedy until it's too late," said **State Senator Christopher Ryan**. "It's time we close this dangerous gap in our laws and stand with those targeted by online abuse. I thank Senator Gounardes and Assembly Member Gonzalez-Rojas for their leadership to enact the CREEP Act."

"I'm proud to be a co-sponsor of the CREEP Act because everyone deserves to feel safe and protected from persistent, predatory behavior," said **State Senator Lea Webb**. "Stalking is not just disturbing—it's dangerous—and it's time our laws reflect the serious, lasting harm it causes. By creating anti-stalking orders, this legislation gives survivors stronger legal tools to defend themselves and helps stop repeated abuse before it escalates further."

"Too many New Yorkers are navigating 21st-century threats with laws written for another era. The CREEP Act brings our legal system up to date by giving survivors a clear and timely path to protection—online and offline," said **State Senator Nathalia Fernandez**. "No one should

have to wait for the worst to happen to be taken seriously. This legislation affirms a simple truth: safety is not a privilege—it's a basic promise our laws must uphold."

"New York must do more to protect victims of stalking, harassment, and coercive control—especially when these behaviors fall through the cracks of the criminal justice system. The CREEP Act brings us in line with 44 other states that recognize the need for civil orders of protection in these cases. During my work on the Minority Task Force on Human Trafficking and Exploitation, I saw firsthand how traffickers manipulate and intimidate their victims in ways that often escape immediate prosecution. This legislation gives victims a tool to reclaim their safety and peace of mind while we work toward stronger, more responsive systems of justice," said **Assembly Member Brian Maher**.

"Right now, a stalking victim in New York has no recourse to get a civil order of protection unless they're in an 'intimate relationship' or related to their stalker," said **Jian Hong Shi, Legislative Analyst at C.A. Goldberg**. "That means a vast number of stalking victims such as students stalked by classmates, therapists stalked by patients, employees stalked by co-workers, celebrities stalked by fans and ex-roommates, are all excluded from the law. If they go to law enforcement, it can take months to investigate, and they're only granted protections if there's an arrest. For various reasons, many victims don't want to go to the police, nor do they necessarily want their stalker arrested. They just want the stalking to stop. The CREEP Act makes that possible."

"As a long-time advocate for survivors of human trafficking, I have seen the harms that come when a victim can not obtain a restraining order from their trafficker who has forced, frauded and coerced them into exploitation and abuse," said **Andrea Powell, Co-founder and Director, Karana Rising**. "Victims experience stalking that includes monitoring their communications, social media or with whom they speak or meet as well as deploying others to follow and monitor their movements. This often leads to physical assaults and in some

cases rape or death. Yet, many victims are unable to obtain a restraining order because of the non-intimate nature of their relationship to their stalker who is also their trafficker. For these reasons, I not only support the CREEP Act but know it's of vital importance to the safety of so many survivors in New York. Pass the CREEP Act and save lives."

"At the Joyful Heart Foundation, we believe that everyone deserves protection from stalking whether they were in an intimate or familial relationship with their stalker or not," said **Ilse Knecht, Director of Policy and Advocacy at Joyful Heart Foundation**. "The CREEP Act closes a dangerous and outdated loophole in New York law and centers the safety and dignity of all survivors. This bill is not just common sense — it's a necessary step toward justice."

"Legal Momentum is proud to endorse the CREEP Act, a commonsense, long-overdue bill that would finally extend protections to all victims of stalking, regardless of their relationship to the offender. It is unacceptable that New Yorkers are still being denied the legal protections they urgently need simply because they are not related to, or romantically involved with, their stalker. As technology makes it easier than ever to destroy someone's life, this gap in our laws must be closed. Survivors deserve protection and the freedom to rebuild their lives with confidence and safety," said **Azalea Carlea, Legal Director of Legal Momentum**.

"Stalking robs victims of control and power. Everyone deserves to be protected and women especially need these protections, not just because stalking is itself dangerous harassment, but because 85% of murders of women are preceded by stalking," said **Stefan Turkheimer, Vice President of Public Policy at RAINN**. The protection options available fall short, failing to protect against violence from strangers. New Yorkers need access to modern, comprehensive protection orders. The CREEP Act offers relief to victims of harassing behavior without a prerequisite arrest or relationship, empowering survivors with control in an otherwise dangerous scenario. It's time for New York to join 43 other states in providing civil anti-

stalking orders.”

"Safe Horizon, the nation's largest nonprofit victim assistance organization, urges the Assembly & Senate to pass the CREEP Act in order to extend civil orders of protection to survivors of stalking who do not have an intimate or familial relationship to the stalker. It is imperative that New York State ensures that it is doing all it can to support, uplift and provide resources to those who have experienced and continue to experience violence, stalking and abuse. The State must ensure that survivors have the ability to hold their abuser accountable and access safety and assistance from our courts. Safe Horizon strongly supports the CREEP Act and urges lawmakers to pass this important bill as quickly as possible," said **Michael Polenberg, Vice President, Government Affairs for Safe Horizon.**

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Enacts the ceasing repeated and extremely egregious predatory (CREEP) behavior act

January 27, 2025

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Andrew Gounardes**

Do you support this bill?