



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

Larkin Bill To Protect Whistle Blowers Passes Senate

William J. Larkin Jr.

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Citing the highly publicized case in Middletown where a school employee was fired after turning in the Superintendent of Schools for possessing pornography, Senator Bill Larkin (R-C, Cornwall-on-Hudson) sponsored legislation (S.1582) that was passed by the State Senate today to protect public employees who file such reports.

"Clearly, there is a need to expand the kinds of actions that are covered under the current whistle blower statute to include protecting people who uncover information about someone who may be putting children at risk," said Senator Larkin. "This is particularly important for any employee who works in our local schools."

Under the current whistle blower statute, only information that "presents a substantial and specific danger to the public health or safety" is covered. Sen. Larkin's bill would expand the scope of the law to include acts that could potentially endanger the welfare of a child, be it physical, mental or sexual abuse.

Referring to the Middletown case, Senator Larkin said, "Was it just a coincidence that one of the people who turned in the Superintendent of Schools in Middletown for

possessing pornography lost his job after this incident occurred? Because of the actions of the school district, we have an entire local community questioning the timing of this 'downsizing' proposal. It takes a very brave and conscientious person to go to the authorities with such a serious accusation. Do we really want people to hesitate when it comes to the safety of our children? This bill would ensure that there could be no retaliation or threat of job loss by a public employer when someone has the courage and conviction to report an incident that could endanger a minor."

The bill was sent to the Assembly.