



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Senator Young to Call on Assembly to Pass "Granny's Bill"

CATHARINE YOUNG April 19, 2007

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101-year-old Rose Morat Brutally Mugged In New York

Legislation to impose tougher penalties for physical assaults on senior citizens continues to await action by the State Assembly. The legislation, announced earlier this month by Senator Cathy Young (R,I,C - Olean) came in response to the vicious attacks on Rose Morat, a 101-year-old Queens woman who was mugged on her way to church, and 85-year-old Solange Elizee, who was mugged and beaten just a half hour later by the same attacker.

While the assailant in these two cases could face robbery charges, under current law he would only face a misdemeanor charge for his physical attacks on the two elderly women. In addition, under current law, the penalties for the physical attack on the 101-year-old woman are the same penalties that would exist if the victim had been a 25-year-old football player.

"Passing "Granny's bill" is just common sense," said Senator Young. "Why the Speaker and

Assembly continue to hold up this legislation is beyond me. After seeing these horrific attacks on the elderly, we knew it was time to take immediate action to protect our seniors. Our legislation closes the loophole in the law and makes it a violent felony to assault any senior over the age of 70. These violent criminals would also not be eligible for parole."

Senator Young called on the Assembly Majority to pass the legislation during remarks she made at a Legislative Lunch for Allegany County Office for the Aging.

Following the attacks on March 5th, the Senate began to review the current laws governing physical attacks against the elderly. This review highlighted the fact that under existing law, these types of physical attacks on seniors are only class A misdemeanor offenses, carrying a potential penalty of up to one year in prison. In both of the muggings in Queens, the attacker could also face additional charges associated with the theft of property.

The legislation would make it a class D or class E violent felony to assault any senior over the age of 70. The bill would also make it a class D or class E violent felony to assault someone age 60 or older who suffers from a disease or infirmity associated with advanced age. A class D violent felony conviction carries a potential penalty of up to 7 years in prison, while a class E felony conviction carries a potential penalty of up to 4 years in prison. As violent felony offenses, these crimes carry determinate sentences and the perpetrators will not be eligible for parole.

During the meeting, Senator Young addressed hospital and nursing home restorations the Senate successfully fought for during this year's state budget process. She also outlined vital senior programs that were funded in the budget.