



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senators Say Troopers Need To Be Better Armed

CATHARINE YOUNG June 19, 2006

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ALBANY - In the wake of recent shootings of state police, two state senators are pushing a bill that increases troopers' firepower to .45 caliber guns.

Senators Cathy Young (R,I,C-Olean) and George H. Winner (R-Elmira) have introduced legislation that requires upgrading to a .45 caliber model that would be determined by the Superintendent of State Police. Currently, troopers are assigned Glock Model 17s, which are 9mm guns.

"Criminals are using very powerful weapons against our troopers, and it is time the state arms our law enforcement more appropriately. We've had two troopers shot this year, with one of them killed. The troopers place their lives on the line every time they go on duty. As they protect us, we must protect them," Senator Young said.

"Our State Troopers risk their lives day after day in defense of our safety and security. We

have a high responsibility as a government to back them up with every possible protection," Senator Winner said.

"Often, law enforcement finds they are outgunned by violent lawbreakers who have no respect for human life. Trooper Sean Brown, 30, took a bullet wound to the abdomen June 10 in Chemung County after he and his partner approached a suspicious vehicle. The 'person of interest' in that case is Ralph "Bucky" Phillips, a career criminal who escaped from Erie County Correctional Facility in Alden April 2. A massive manhunt is underway right now to apprehend this escapee who is from Chautauqua County," Senator Young said.

"On March 1, Trooper Andrew "A.J." Sperr, 33, was tragically murdered after a bank robbery near Elmira. Trooper Sperr was wearing bullet-resistant armor, but was shot several times in areas of his body not protected by equipment. Although this hero was able to fire back at the two suspects, wounding one of them four times, the suspect still fatally shot and killed Trooper Sperr with a .357 magnum," Senator Young said.

"Our troopers deserve better. They can't protect us if they can't protect themselves. We need action now," Senator Young said.