



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## **Senator Introduces Legislation to Combat Online Perverts**

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Predators webcasting sexual abuse over the Internet and those viewing and participating online will face severe penalties in New York State under a bill just introduced by State Senator Catharine "Cathy" Young (R,I,C - Olean).

The bill would establish the class B felony of promoting a sex offense for producing, directing or promoting any visual or audio representation, and establish the class C felony of knowingly possessing any such representation, and designates both such felonies as violent felony offenses.

The legislation comes in response to a recent event in Jamestown where a 55-year-old man abused a 9-year-old girl and broadcast it live over the Internet. While the

predator was molesting the child, Internet viewers sent instant messages offering encouragement and suggestions of abuse.

"The shocking and depraved actions of this sex offender give us a sickening glimpse on the underworld of the Internet. While this criminal is expected to be sentenced to 18 years, we need to make penalties even tougher," Senator Young said. "We live in a world where our laws need to keep up with the pace of technological advances. This bill would send an important message to potential sexual predators that we will punish those who take advantage of technology to harm innocent children."

Senator Young said, "The Internet has provided sexual predators with a worldwide forum where like-minded pedophiles have formed online communities which openly discuss and provide mutual support for their perverted philosophies and activities in anonymity. With increased accessibility and real time communication, this community of predators have become more impudent and explicit in their exploitation of children," she said.

"By creating these new crimes and directly addressing the solicitation or participation in such heinous acts by other Internet users through instant messaging, e-mailing or blogging, this bill will accurately reflect the full scope of injury inflicted by these Internet crimes against children," concluded Senator Young.

Senator Young expects to pass this bill before the end of the legislative session.