



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian X. Foley

Sen. Foley Acts to Protect Domestic Violence Victims and Preserve their Right to Vote

BRIAN X. FOLEY March 2, 2010

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The New York State Senate passed an important bill sponsored by Senator Brian X. Foley (D – Blue Point) that allows victims of domestic violence to have their addresses sealed. Sen. Foley's bill (S. 5945) addresses a flaw in the election law that mandates boards of elections to disclose a voter's address to anyone requesting that information.

Often times, victims of domestic violence move to get away from their abuser and do all they can to hide their new location. Since the law would require their address to be disclosed to the public, victims do not register to vote in fear of being found by their abuser.

Sen. Foley's bill will allow victims of domestic violence to get a court order that directs the local board of election to seal the victim's address.

"Domestic violence continues to cause harm to women and families throughout our state," Sen. Foley said. "Victims of domestic violence should not have to choose between their safety and their constitutional rights. I am proud to sponsor this legislation because it will protect victims of domestic violence while preserving their right to vote," said Sen. Foley, who has been an advocate for domestic violence victims throughout his career in public service.

Jo Anne Sanders, Executive Director of the Suffolk County Coalition Against Domestic Violence praised the passage of this important bill. "This legislation is an important step in providing safety to victims of domestic violence who want to enjoy their voting rights as citizens of the United States," said Sanders. "Many victims fleeing abusive relationships make every effort to maintain a confidential location for the safety of themselves and their children. Senator Foley has been a strong leader in his support for abused adults and children living with family violence."

"Perpetrators of domestic violence cause irreparable harm to their victims," Sen. Foley said. "They should not be allowed to cause victims to lose their constitutional right to vote. I am pleased that we have finally passed this measure in the senate and look forward to it being signed into law."