



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian X. Foley

Senator Foley Protects Victims of Domestic Violence

BRIAN X. FOLEY June 3, 2010

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Legislation sponsored by Senator Brian X. Foley (D – Blue Point) aimed at protecting the rights and security of victims of domestic violence has been signed into law by Governor Paterson.

The new law allows victims of domestic violence to request a court order that requires the Board of Elections to keep their registration records confidential. This means that victims will be afforded an added layer of protection in keeping their new address out of the hands of their abusers.

“We can never do enough to protect victims of domestic violence,” said Senator Foley. “By overhauling a broken and antiquated law that punishes victims, we are taking another important step forward in helping victims rebuild their lives. Keeping the location of these individuals confidential allows them to exercise their fundamental right to vote while helping to ensure their safety.”

“This legislation helps victims of domestic violence maintain normalcy in their lives,” said Pamela C. Johnson, Executive Director of Victims Information Bureau of Suffolk (VIBS), an organization that assists survivors of domestic violence, rape or sexual assault. “No one should have to choose between their safety and the fundamental right to vote and this will

allow victims to protect their anonymity and further reduce stalking by the abuser.”

Under the old law, the Board of Elections was required to provide the address of any registered voter to any person who submits the request in writing and cites the applicable law. As a result, victims of domestic violence were forced to choose between security and voting, and often did not register to vote.