



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Stephen M. Saland

Senator Saland's Legislation to Permit Child Victims and Witnesses to Testify via Closed Circuit Television Passes the Senate

STEPHEN M. SALAND February 8, 2011

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Senator Steve Saland (R, I, C - Poughkeepsie) today announced that the Senate has passed his legislation to minimize the emotional harm to child victims and witnesses in murder, attempted murder cases, (S.1433), or criminal assault and endangering the welfare of a child (S.2194) cases by allowing them to testify via closed-circuit television.

In 1985, the New York State legislature approved a law allowing children to testify by closed-circuit television in court proceedings involving sexual abuse. Senator Saland's legislation extends this protection to children who are similarly traumatized as a result of being called to testify. Children who testify in court often have a more difficult time recovering emotionally.

"Children who have endured the emotional anguish of being assaulted, or witnessing the murder of a parent or loved one should be considered a vulnerable child witness, and as such, should not have to recount the trauma in an open court, face-to-face with the accused," said Senator Saland. "The use of closed circuit television would allow the prosecution to proceed in a manner that would minimize the pressure and anguish experienced by children."

The bills will now be sent to the Assembly for consideration.