



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

Senator Nozzolio Sponsors “Brittany’s Law” to Register and Track Violent Felons

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO April 11, 2011

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Continuing his aggressive efforts to protect our communities from violent crime, New York State Senator Mike Nozzolio has sponsored legislation (S.3645A) to create a statewide registry tracking violent felony offenders who are released from prison. The legislation, known as “Brittany’s Law”, is named for 12-year-old Brittany Passalacqua, who was murdered along with her mother by a violent convicted felon who had been released from prison early and put on parole just months earlier.

“It is unconscionable that these horrific crimes could have been prevented if New York State had stronger measures in place to monitor violent offenders, who pose a high risk of committing more crimes once they are released into society,” said Senator Nozzolio, who serves as Chairman of the Senate Crime Victims, Crime and Correction Committee.

“Brittany’s Law will not only provide law enforcement with a valuable investigative tool in the fight against violent crime, but it will also provide important information to communities that could prevent future tragedies from occurring.”

In November 2009, Brittany Passalacqua and her mother Helen Buchel were brutally and savagely murdered by John Edward Brown at their home in Geneva. Brown had been released from prison after serving only 2 ½ years of a 3 year sentence for violently assaulting his infant daughter in 2003.

Since these tragic murders occurred, Senator Nozzolio has worked closely with Dale Driscoll, who is Helen’s mother and Brittany’s grandmother, to develop legislation that would establish tougher penalties for violent offenders so they can no longer threaten the lives and safety of innocent people in our communities.

“Dale has been an outstanding and courageous advocate for stronger criminal justice laws so that other families do not have to suffer the heartbreak that her family has been through,” said Senator Nozzolio. “I thank her for all of her hard work and encouragement in helping me develop this legislation to honor the memory of her daughter and

granddaughter. I also thank State Senator Joseph Griffo for his invaluable efforts in getting this legislation introduced in the State Senate.”

Brittany’s Law, which Senator Nozzolio is sponsoring with Senator Joseph Griffo, would require all individuals convicted of a violent felony to register with the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) upon release from prison. The registry would be accessible to the public, similar to the registry of sex offenders that the State currently has in place. The legislation also establishes annual registration requirements for offenders to allow local law enforcement agencies and the State to monitor the whereabouts of these individuals.

“New York State currently requires all convicted sex offenders to register with the State and keeps track of those individuals. It makes no sense that we do not do the same for those who commit violent felony crimes against our citizens. We cannot continue to put innocent New Yorkers at risk. It has, unfortunately, become very clear that we must adopt a tougher stance on crime and issues relating to parole to prevent more tragedies from happening,” said Senator Nozzolio.

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