



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Stephen M. Saland

Senator Saland's Sex Offense Training Bill Is Signed Into Law

STEPHEN M. SALAND October 4, 2011

| ISSUE: **CODES**

| COMMITTEE: **CODES**

Senator Steve Saland (R, I, C - Poughkeepsie) today announced that his legislation to establish policies and procedures for the investigation of sex offenses by police officers, and provide training to judges and justices on crimes involving sexual assault, (S.4895) has been signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

Over the past 10 years, the NYS Legislature has enacted over 100 new tough-on-crime laws which have helped reduce New York's crime rate. Among these laws have been significant enactments to crack down on sexual offenders, including the landmark Sexual Assault Reform Act of 2000 and successive improvements to the State Sex Offender Registration Act (Megan's Law). Yet, studies indicate that fewer than twenty percent of sexual assault crimes are reported to the police; of those that are reported, fewer than three percent reach successful prosecution.

"Sexual assault remains one of the most violent and least reported crimes in the United States," stated Senator Saland. "This new law will hopefully lead to more reports and will aid in the investigation and prosecution of sex offenders."

Experiences reported by probation and parole officers nationwide, indicate that sex offenders are a specific group of offenders in need of special management practices. Advocates for the prevention of sexual violence continue to express a need for better instruction for police officers related to response to sexual violence.

Senate bill S.4895 directs the Municipal Police Training Council to establish policies and procedures for police officers of crimes involving sexual assault. Such policies and procedures would be developed after consultation with rape crisis centers experienced in assisting victims in New York State. The bill also amends the judiciary law to provide training for judges and justices on crimes involving sexual assault. This legislation is not a mandate on municipalities as it does not require training of veteran officers. Instead, it provides for the development and dissemination of policies and procedures for their training when such training occurs.