



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Stephen M. Saland

Senator Saland: New York State Must Extend Protections for Mandatory Reporting Bill on Child Abuse

Stephen M. Saland

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Senator Steve Saland (R, I, C - Poughkeepsie), Chairman of the Senate Codes Committee and an author of a number of child protection and domestic violence laws, announced that New York State must act on his legislation which requires suspected acts of abuse by a person in a position of authority to be reported immediately to law enforcement.

“Most people are unaware that until 2000, our laws involving mandated reporting of suspected abuse only captured those acts committed by family members or members of the same household,” stated Senator Saland. “Recognizing the gross deficiencies in our laws, I fought to expand it to include abuse in an educational setting and I continue to fight for further expansions which would include cases like those recently identified at Penn State.”

In 2000, Senator Saland won a major victory for school children and their families when his bill was enacted into law mandating that allegations of child abuse in an educational setting must be reported to law enforcement. Prior to the adoption of this landmark legislation, suspected abuse was swept under the rug, not unlike what is being alleged in the current Penn State tragedy involving multiple young children who are coming forward with allegations that they were sexually abused.

“The account of what occurred at Penn State does not merely raise concerns that child abuse committed by authority figures continues to go unreported, but underscores the need for New York State to address this egregious abuse of authority. We know all too well the profile of the pedophile is a person who often uses their position of authority to victimize youth. It is vitally important that children who are physically and sexually abused have the protection of the full force of the law,” said Saland. “Parents need to be assured that persons in positions of authority who victimize children will be reported and prosecuted. My legislation would ensure that law enforcement is immediately notified and the allegations of abuse are investigated.”

In addition, Senator Saland will introduce a bill to expand the definition of educational setting to include higher education institutions, thereby requiring them to comply with mandatory reporting and criminal investigation of cases of child abuse. Senator Saland will also advance legislation which will extend the statute of limitations for criminal acts of abuse involving children. These bills will be introduced in the coming days for consideration when session reconvenes in January.

“As the Chairman of the Senate Codes Committee, I will continue to work with my colleagues in the Assembly to ensure that victims are heard and protected in our state,” said Senator Saland.