



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Stephen M. Saland

Senator Saland Announces Agreement on Dna Databank Expansion

STEPHEN M. SALAND March 15, 2012

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All Felony and Penal Law Misdemeanor Convictions Would Require Submission of DNA Sample

Senator Steve Saland (R-I-C, Poughkeepsie) announces an agreement reached on his bill providing the largest expansion of the state's DNA databank since it was created in 1994. The legislation is similar to the databank expansion plan proposed by Governor Cuomo in his Executive Budget and the bill sponsored by Senator Saland which passed earlier this year in the Senate.

Under the existing law, people convicted of about half the crimes that are committed are required to submit DNA samples, including every penal law felony and just 36 misdemeanor crimes in the penal law. The legislation agreed upon by the Senate, Assembly and Governor would expand that list to include all felonies in state law and every penal law misdemeanor with the exception of a Class B misdemeanor marijuana possession, as long as there were no prior convictions. It is projected that the expansion would add about 46,000 individual DNA samples a year to the databank.

“Currently, not all misdemeanors and felonies require a DNA sample to be collected. The expansion is particularly critical when studies show that persons who commit serious crimes have also often committed other crimes including lower-level misdemeanors,” stated Senator Saland. “Enactment of this legislation provides a powerful tool to bring closure to unsolved crimes and prevent further crimes from taking place, while providing a means by which a wrongfully convicted person can be exonerated, or a suspect eliminated.”

The DNA databank expansion bill is supported by law enforcement organizations across the state, including the New York State Sheriffs Association, District Attorneys Association of the State of New York, the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police, the New York State Troopers PBA, Downstate Coalition for Crime Victims, Joyful Heart Foundation, the Safe Horizon victim assistance organization and many other law enforcement groups throughout the state.

“I thank Governor Cuomo for his efforts to provide law enforcement with this critical crime fighting tool and I commend my colleagues in the Assembly for recognizing the importance of expanding the utilization of DNA technology,” said Senator Saland.

Since its inception, DNA stored in the databank has been used to identify perpetrators in about 10,000 crimes, including 900 murders and 3,500 sexual assaults. Since 2006, when the

DNA databank was expanded to include 36 misdemeanors, law enforcement agencies have used the information to convict 1,460 criminals.

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