



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Senator Klein to MPAA: Let Teens See Teen Bullying Documentary

JEFFREY D. KLEIN March 20, 2012

Senator Jeffrey D. Klein, (D-Bronx/ Westchester), called upon the Motion Picture Association of America to reverse its decision to give a “R” rating to teen cyberbullying documentary, “Bully.”

The film follows three teens who have been the victims of cyberbullying and two families of children who have taken their own lives after being bullied. It had received a “R”, or “Restricted,” rating due to profanity that had been used during these attacks.

In a letter to the MPAA's Chairman and CEO, former U.S. Senator Chris Dodd, Senator Klein urged a PG-13 rating for the documentary, pointing out that its accounts of cyberbullying match those he has heard from children, parents and educators, across New York.

“The subject matter of this documentary matches the horror stories that have been coming out of virtually every corner of this state,” **Senator Klein** said. “Tragically, modern technology is being used as a weapon with potentially deadly consequences, and we need to do everything we can to raise awareness of this destructive behavior. I believe it is critically important that the MPAA reverse course, lower the rating, and allow this very important film to reach a wider audience.”

“Bully” Director Lee Hirsch, said: "I applaud Senator Klein for standing up for victims who have been bullied by lobbying the MPAA to reverse its decision of an "R" rating to "Bully". We need to make sure as many affected teens are able to see this film in its entirety to ensure the message of the film is not lost."

Senator Klein is also sponsoring legislation, (S.6132), that would update New York’s stalking, aggravated harassment and criminal impersonation laws to include cyberbullying. The legislation has bi-partisan support and 17 cosponsors.

He is also sponsoring the New York Cyberbullying Census, a first-ever study on cyberbullying in New York State. Children in Grades 3 to 12 are urged to participate by filling out an anonymous 12-question survey at www.nycyberbullycensus.com.

"Bully" is slated to be released on March 30.

A copy of the letter is enclosed.