



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Senate Passes Bill to Keep Violent Repeat Offenders in Prison

STEPHEN M. SALAND May 22, 2012

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Measure Prompted by Murder of Utica Woman by Career Rapist on Parole

The New York State Senate today passed legislation to require certain violent felons to serve their maximum prison term if there is evidence that their release would pose an imminent threat to society. The bill (S.6020A) would help protect the public by keeping repeat offenders off the streets and limit “good behavior” and other rewards from reducing the time spent in prison.

Last November in Utica, 68-year-old Linda Turner was sexually assaulted and murdered by a paroled career rapist named Robert Blainey. He had been released early from prison due to merit time earned for good behavior while incarcerated, despite saying to the state Board of Parole, “Society is safer with me in prison,” among other foretelling statements.

Under current state law, Blainey was only required to serve two-thirds of his 1989 sentence of 12 ½ to 25 years with the merit time he had accumulated for good behavior while incarcerated. Even if the state Parole Board believed he was still a danger to society, they had no choice but to release him early so long as Blainey signed the conditional release terms.

The bill passed today gives the state Board of Parole the authority to require certain violent felons to serve out their full prison sentences when the parole board finds convincing

evidence that the release of the inmate would pose an imminent threat to society. The legislation also makes the earning of good behavior allowances for violent felony offenders contingent upon their not being an imminent threat to society upon release.

The bill will be sent to the Assembly.