



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Martin J. Golden

Senate Passes Bill to Protect Social Services Workers From Assault

Martin J. Golden

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The New York State Senate today passed legislation, sponsored by Senator Marty Golden (R-C-I, Brooklyn), to enhance the criminal penalties for assaulting employees of a county social services district while in performance of their duties. The bill (S7720) represents a three-way agreement with the Governor and Assembly.

In April, the City of New York released the latest data on social service workers assaulted on the job. Last year, 61 employees of the City's three social services agencies were assaulted while performing their job duties, a 10 percent increase from 56 assaults in 2010.

"Social services workers are directly on the front lines of the government's effort to protect and care for those in need and the statistics prove it can be a very dangerous job," Senator Golden said. "They deserve the protections created by this bill that would deter people from using physical force to injure, threaten, or intimidate these dedicated employees."

This bill would make assaulting an employee of any local social services district while performing duties directly related to his or her job, a Class D felony, punishable by up to seven years in prison.

Current law provides for enhanced criminal assault penalties to protect police officers, firefighters, paramedics, emergency room workers, school employees, and specific transit personnel, but does not extend such protection to employees providing the public with other social services.

The bill was sent to the Assembly.