



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

# **'Protect Our Children Act' Passes The New York State Senate For Second Straight Year**

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*Senator Grisanti sponsors bill that protects children during "National Child Abuse Prevention Month"*

(Buffalo, New York) Senator Mark Grisanti (R, I-60) is proud to announce the passage of the "protect our children act," which helps to protect children from cruel and repeated maltreatment. It is now time for the Assembly to act.

The bill, which was sponsored by Senator Grisanti, originally passed the Senate last year but did not pass the Assembly in 2012.

"This legislation will help to protect our children from anyone who is put in a position of trust to care for them and instead commits the ultimate violation and in some way abuses them," said Sen. Grisanti. "This bill would increase the severity of punishment for anyone who would cause harm to a child, I am calling on the Assembly to pass this legislation immediately!"

Known as S. 1721, the legislation identifies a "person in a position of trust" to mean any person who is charged with any duty or responsibility for the health, education, welfare, supervision or care of another person, either independently or through another person under 14 years of age, no matter how brief a time period it may be."

The offenses of aggravated murder of a child, aggravated abuse of a child in the

third degree, aggravated abuse of a child in the second degree, aggravated abused of a child in the first degree, aggravated manslaughter of a child, aggravated endangering the welfare of a child, and concealment of death would all be punishable, and a harsher punishment would be imposed for the murder of a person under 14 years of age while in the course of committing certain sex offenses.

April was first declared Child Abuse Prevention Month by presidential proclamation in 1983. Since then, April has been designated as a time to acknowledge the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse. According to statistics obtained by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, an estimated 675,000 children were victims of child abuse last year, with over 1,500 children dying during that same time period as a result of abuse or neglect.

"The majority of reported child abuse cases have been shown to come from situations and conditions that can be prevented when community programs are engaged and involved and provide support to those who need it," said Sen. Grisanti. "A community that cares about parental support, early childhood development and maternal mental health issues can help foster nurturing families and healthy children. For those who do commit abuse, we must have laws on the books that punish them for this inconceivable and reckless behavior."