



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kathleen A. Marchione

## Senator Kathy Marchione's legislation strengthening campus safety signed into law

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For Immediate Release: December 18, 2014

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## **Senator Kathy Marchione's legislation strengthening campus safety signed into law**

**New State law will strengthen the Campus Safety Act by requiring colleges and universities to report violent felonies and missing persons cases to local law enforcement within 24 hours, Senator Marchione says the new, bi-partisan law will “help ensure the safety of college students and the security of college campuses”**

Senator Kathy Marchione (R,C,I-Halfmoon) today announced that Governor Cuomo has signed into State law bi-partisan legislation she sponsored that strengthens the Campus Safety Act by requiring colleges and universities to report violent felonies and missing persons cases to local law enforcement within 24 hours. Senator Marchione said the new law will help ensure the safety of college students, improve the security of college campuses, and hailed its enactment.

“New York State has taken an important, long overdue step toward ensuring the safety of college students and improving the security of our college and university campuses. The bi-partisan legislation I sponsored, and is now State Law, is a common sense solution to ensure the prompt notification of local law enforcement in the event of a violent felony or missing person case occurring on a college or university campus. In such situations, every second counts – the sooner local law enforcement is notified, the sooner we can avoid a tragedy and ensure that justice is served. I am thankful that Governor Cuomo signed this much-needed public safety measure into law,” Senator Marchione said.

Senator Marchione championed the bi-partisan legislation, Senate Bill S.2753B, which strengthens the Campus Safety Act of 1999 by requiring that all violent felonies and missing persons be reported to local law enforcement within 24 hours after being reported to a college or university. The legislation was unanimously approved by the State Senate on June 11, 2014. The bill's Assembly companion, Assembly Bill A.2089B, sponsored by Democratic Assemblyman Edward Braunstein (D-26<sup>th</sup> District), passed the Assembly on

May 5, 2014.

“I would like to thank my legislative partner in this effort, Assemblyman Edward Braunstein. The strong, bi-partisan support our legislation received from both houses of the state legislature should be a model for advancing real solutions to improve public safety. I am pleased this important issue remained above partisan politics and that we were able to achieve such an important victory,” Senator Marchione said.

“I also would like to thank, and recognize, Doug and Mary Lyall, who have been such passionate and powerful advocates for increasing the safety of all college students and improving the security of our college and university campuses. The Lyall’s have been such strong supporters of this effort and are true, tireless champions in the cause of safer college campuses. This victory is their victory,” Senator Marchione said.

“Mary and I are very pleased with the positive changes made in the amendment to the original Campus Safety Act. The law will be strengthened by mandating communication between the campus and local law enforcement in the event of a violent felony or a missing person. With missing person cases time is the enemy, allowing for evidence to disappear and witnesses to be scattered far and wide. The sooner an official investigation begins, the better the chances are for a safe return. We appreciate Senator Marchione and Assemblyman Braunstein’s tireless advocacy in advancing this important issue,” said Doug and Mary Lyall, Parents of Suzanne Lyall, missing since 1998.

“The signing of this bill sends a strong message that New York State is taking the problem of campus sexual assault seriously. The number of violent crimes reported on campuses, and not investigated by local authorities, is disturbing and simply inexcusable. This legislation will lead to an increase in the prosecution of criminals by ensuring that these assaults are reported to local law enforcement agencies, which are more properly trained to investigate serious criminal issues. I would like to thank Senator Marchione for her partnership in passing this vital legislation and I am grateful to Governor Cuomo for signing it into law,” said Assemblyman David Braunstein.

Enacted in 1999, the Campus Safety Act requires colleges and universities to adopt and implement plans for the notification to local law enforcement of any violent felony offense or missing person occurring at, or on the grounds of, each such institution.

The Campus Safety Act requires that plans be created, and not that colleges and universities must report violent felonies and missing persons to local law enforcement. The Campus Safety Act became law because of the courageous efforts of Doug and Mary Lyall, whose daughter, Suzanne Lyall, has been missing since disappearing from the University at Albany on March 2, 1998.

The new State law does not conflict with the federal Campus Sexual Assault Victims' Bill of Rights, which gives the victim of a sexual offense the right on whether or not to report such offense to local law enforcement agencies.

The bill signing marks the 19<sup>th</sup> State Law that Senator Marchione has sponsored since entering the New York State Senate in January of 2013.