



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

State Senate Passes Klein Bill Banning Sex Offenders From Family Homeless Shelters

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*Legislation Prevents Level Two & Three Sex Offenders From Residing in Shelters
With Families and Children*

ALBANY, NY – Independent Democratic Conference Leader Senator **Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester)** today announced that the State Senate overwhelmingly passed (52-0) legislation he sponsors that prohibits level two and level three sex offenders from living in temporary emergency housing and homeless shelters used to house families with children.

“Allowing high-level sex offenders to stay in family shelters where vulnerable women and children are trying to get back on their feet is not only troublesome but dangerous. With more than 60,000 homeless New Yorkers sleeping in New York City shelters and thousands more out on the street, we need to take every measure to protect those in our care,” **said Senator Klein**. “Just days after finding two such predators residing at a Bronx-shelter in my district, I am proud this legislation has passed the Senate. This marks a critical step in protecting the thousands of women and children seeking shelter and I look forward to seeing this important bill pass both houses in the coming weeks.”

Senator Klein’s legislation (S.851-2015) prohibits level two and level three sex offenders from being housed in family shelters and requires by law that they be placed in adult-only shelters or shelters without children. This legislation amends current Social Services Law and brings the shelter system up to speed with current law concerning public housing, where sex offenders are already prohibited from residing.

“The issue of high-level sex offenders taking up residence in emergency shelters intended for homeless families remains a concern since first coming to our attention in 2007. Federal law prohibits public housing admission to level 2 and 3 sex offenders – and we are seeking to extend that protection to our most vulnerable children and families.” **said Assembly Matthew Titone (D-North Shore), co-sponsor of the 2015 bill**. “Today 80% of New York’s homeless are women and children; every day that the current law remains in place, each of New York’s 25,000 homeless children remains in avoidable risk.”

Last week, two male sex offenders were found to be residing at the Crystal Family Residence, a 95-room family shelter and former location of the controversial Capri Whitestone Motel in the Throggs Neck section of the Bronx.

“Housing sex offenders in a family homeless shelter with young women and children shows an unprecedented level of carelessness on the part of the shelter system,” **said Assemblyman Michael Benedetto (D-Bronx)**. “Families and children in our care deserve more. This legislation is an important first step in protecting those who are fighting to start over and overcome great adversity and I eagerly await its passage in the Assembly.”

“Our shelters are safe havens for families and children experiencing the most difficult of hardships,” **said Bronx Councilman James Vacca (D-Bronx).** “We cannot, in good conscience, accept the risk of allowing sex offenders to live in close quarters with these already vulnerable families.”

“We fully support this positive change directed at the safety and welfare of residents at the Crystal Family Residence. This is a significant first step in making New York City shelters safer for the women and children who reside there, but there is still work to be done,” **said Martin Prince, Board Chair of Community Board 10.**

“The homeless population in New York has increased astronomically in recent years. Making sure that each and every person who needs a home is provided with the safe haven they so deserve is of the utmost importance.”