



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senate Passes Bill to Better Track State Transfer of Sex Offenders

PATRICK M. GALLIVAN January 27, 2015

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Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) announces the Senate has passed a bill (S.396) that would require New York State to notify a local municipality when a sex offender is transferred from a state facility to a community program or residence.

The bill sponsored by Gallivan would amend the mental hygiene law to require the Commissioner of the Office of People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) to notify the chief executive officer of any municipality where a sex offender is transferred. The superintendent of schools in which the facility is located must also be notified.

"Local officials have a right to know about the transfer of sex offenders into a community program or residential neighborhood so that they have time to properly address public concerns and security issues. Once notification is made, local officials will have the information necessary to appropriately respond and keep their community safe," Gallivan said.

The legislation would require the Commissioner of OPWDD to notify local officials no later than ten calendar days prior to the transfer taking place.

The state has placed several developmentally disabled sex offenders at state-owned group homes on Leydecker Road in the Town of West Seneca and in the Village of Scottsville in Monroe County after a state facility near Rochester was closed, catching the community off guard and raising concerns about public safety.

The bill was part of a package of legislation passed by the Senate that would help keep communities safer from sexual predators. The seven bills, which have been sent to the Assembly, would help prevent the most dangerous offenders from having contact with children and college students, strengthen penalties for those who help sex offenders evade registration requirements, and create a public awareness program to educate schools, community groups, and clergy on issues related to sex offenders.