



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rich Funke

## Senate Passes Funke Bill to Make the Obstruction of Firefighters Performing Emergency Medical Care a Crime

**RICH FUNKE** May 20, 2015

*Legislation would hold anyone who intentionally obstructs a firefighter performing emergency medical care on a sick or injured person guilty of a Class A Misdemeanor*

The New York State Senate today passed S.2977, a bill sponsored by Senator **Rich Funke** to make the intentional obstruction of a firefighter performing emergency medical care on a sick or injured person a crime. **Funke's** legislation would classify the crime as a Class A Misdemeanor and passed the Senate with unanimous, bipartisan support.

*"Firefighters put their lives on the line in many ways during the course of their official duties and they deserve to be protected no matter what type of work they are engaged in," said **Funke**. "Whether it's a fire, accident, or medical emergency, firefighters are always there to keep us safe and I'm proud this legislation ensures the law is on their side to keep them safe as well. I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their support of this legislation and I look forward to seeing Majority Leader Morelle's bill move forward in the Assembly."*

New York State Penal Code affords firefighters special protections while engaged in a variety of functions during the performance of their official duties. However, a loophole in State law does not adequately protect firefighters performing emergency medical care. In a 2004 incident, the City of Rochester Fire Department responded to a call and began delivering emergency medical care for a victim when an uninvolved onlooker became agitated and physically attacked firefighters on scene. Despite the egregious nature of the incident, the assailant could not be charged under existing law protecting firefighters. As a result of **Funke's** leadership, S.2977 would close this loophole to protect firefighters performing emergency medical care.

The bill is also being carried in the New York State Assembly by Assembly Majority Leader Joe Morelle, where it was most recently referred to the Committee on Codes.

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