



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Bonacic

Senate Passes Bonacic's Bill to Increase Safety and Security at Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities.

JOHN J. BONACIC June 10, 2015

| ISSUE: **JUDICIARY, CRIMINAL, JUDGES OR JUDICIAL**

(Albany, NY)-The New York State Senate has passed legislation, S1901 by Senator Bonacic, that would increase safety and security at alcohol and substance abuse treatment facilities that are utilized for judicial diversion programs. This legislation would require a court to consider a defendant's propensity for violence before assigning them to a judicial diversion program for substance abuse and would require a greater level of security at facilities that treat judicial diversion defendants.

"A defendant's propensity to commit violence is something that needs to be taken into account when the court system is assigning him or her to a judicial diversion program for substance abuse," said Senator Bonacic. "By passing this legislation, we are taking proactive steps to protect the staff of these facilities from unnecessary harm by violent offenders."

Senator Bonacic was moved to sponsor this legislation after an incident at the Renaissance Project, a substance abuse treatment facility outside of Ellenville, NY, claimed the life of a security guard and badly injured a nurse in 2010. Richard Giga, a felon with a history of violence, killed security guard Lee Wood and stabbed Nurse Keri Reynolds, seriously wounding her. Giga then led police on a 15-hour manhunt before he was captured.

The bill now moves to the Assembly for consideration.

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