



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph E. Robach

Senate To Act On Bill To Protect New Yorkers From Internet Sex Predators

JOSEPH E. ROBACH

The New York State Senate will also act on legislation sponsored by Senator Joe Robach (R-C-I-WF, Rochester), that would increase criminal penalties for using a computer to commit a sex crime against a child.

The new and comprehensive Electronic Security and Targeting of Online Predators Act (e-STOP), introduced at the request of Attorney General Andrew Cuomo, establishes vital protections against sexual predators so users of the Internet - especially children - can more safely surf the Web. The legislation will restrict certain sex offenders' use of the Internet and updates Megan's Law for the Internet age.

Senator Joseph Robach said, "The Internet and popular social networking sites are the playground of choice for many young people, and for sexual predators. This measure will ensure greater protections for kids, more control for parents and more tools for law enforcement to better police the Internet and protect people from being victimized. I commend Attorney General Cuomo and Senator Dean Skelos for their work on this important issue."

Current laws do not provide enough protection for our children and fail to keep sexual offenders from misusing the Internet. Unfortunately, recent investigations have found that social networking sites have become an easy way for sexual predators to prey upon our children.

Passage of the Electronic Security and Targeting of Online Predators Act (S.6875-A) would allow New York to fight the increasing misuse of the Internet. The law would force sex offenders to register their online identifiers; the social networking sites could then use that information to ban sexual predators.

The Electronic Security and Targeting of Online Predators (e-STOP) Act:

- Requires that sex offenders register all of their Internet accounts and Internet identifiers (e-mail addresses and designations used for chat, instant messaging, social networking or other similar Internet communication) with the State Division of Criminal Justice Services.

- Authorizes the Division of Criminal Justice Services to release state sex offender Internet identifiers (e-mail addresses and designations used for chat, instant messaging, social networking or other similar Internet communication) to social networking sites and certain other online services, that may be used to prescreen or remove sex offenders from using the site's services, and notify law enforcement authorities and other government officials of potential violations of law and threats to public safety.

- Requires, as a condition of probation or parole, mandatory restrictions on a sex offender's access to the Internet where the offender's victim was a minor, the Internet was used to commit the offense or the offender was designated a level 3 (highest level) offender. Such offenders would be banned from accessing social networking web sites, accessing pornographic materials, communicating with anyone for the purpose of promoting sexual relations with a minor, and communicating, in most circumstances, with anyone under the age of 18.

The Senate will also act today on legislation that establishes a felony offense, Computer Sex Crimes, when an offender uses a computer to facilitate and commit a sex crime against a child. The bill (S.1921-A), sponsored by Senator Joe Robach (R-C-I-WF, Rochester), would significantly increase the penalties for anyone found guilty of using a computer to commit a sex crime against a child.

Senator Joseph Robach said, "Sexual crimes against children are amongst the most heinous in our community. The Internet is a wonderful tool that has transformed and improved the lives of millions of people. Unfortunately, sexual predators have also made it a dangerous weapon that can be used to victimize innocent children. By passing this bill, we will crack down on pornographers and predators who use computer technology to harm and exploit young children."

The bill would also put computer sex crimes under the umbrella of a "designated offense," allowing law enforcement to obtain eavesdropping or video surveillance warrants.