



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Important Bills Passed This Week: Better Protection NY Children, Increase Penalties for Leaving Accident Scene, and More!

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS May 21, 2014

**Veterans to Receive Benefit Information When Applying for a Driver's License or ID:** Sponsored by Democratic State Senator Gustavo Rivera, Senate Bill S2226B will provide an option on DMV application forms for any veteran to authorize the DMV to share data with the Division of Veteran Affairs through Vets Connect. Vets Connect would use the information to provide and update participating veterans with information regarding benefits and services that they may be eligible for.

**Better Protection New York State Children:** Current laws regarding the endangerment, abuse, manslaughter, and murder of children are unnecessarily complex and can lead to disproportionately lax punishments for many offenders. Senate Bill S1721B provides a clear and enforceable replacement for existing laws while preserving their original intent. This legislation includes definitions and penalties for the aggravated endangerment, manslaughter, and murder of a child; obstructing the location of a child; concealing the death of a child; and failure to report a missing child to the authorities.

**Mandate Jail Time for Violation of an Order Of Protection:** Orders of protection are intended to prevent abusers from interacting with those they have harmed. Unfortunately, orders of protection may be repeatedly violated without any serious consequences for the violators, leaving those impacted by domestic violence at risk of further harm and retaliation. Senate Bill S844B, sponsored by Democratic State Senator Kevin Parker, will provide mandatory jail time for violating an order of protection and send a strong message that violations will not be tolerated.

**Increase Penalties for Leaving the Scene of an Accident Without Reporting:** Most parties who flee the scene of an accident after causing serious injuries do so to avoid prosecution, often for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. By leaving the scene of an accident these

individuals reduce the likelihood that substances will be detected in their bloodstream and thereby avoid the penalties they deserve. Senate Bill S4188 will increase the penalty for leaving the scene of an accident from a maximum of 4 years to 7 years.