



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Bill Perkins

Open Letter To Governor Cuomo Concerning The Central Park Five & Senate Bill 1267 Pertaining To Videotaped interrogations

Bill Perkins

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On June 24th, in the wake of news that New York City has finally settled with the Central Park Five, Senator Bill Perkins wrote an open letter to Governor Cuomo calling for his immediate and active partnership to pass Senate Bill 1267—legislation he carries that requires the videotaping of entire interrogations in all felony investigations.

We know that in the case of the Central Park Five, the illegal, unethical, immoral and despicable behavior exhibited by the police and prosecutors never saw the light of day in a courtroom—and absent this scrutiny a cataclysmic injustice occurred. The Senator's Bill would change this situation by declaring that any statement made during a custodial interrogation concerning a felony is inadmissible unless such interrogation was electronically recorded.

Right now, many local jurisdictions voluntarily record interrogations with equipment they purchased through federal and state grants. However, this ad hoc system means that we have two types of justice standards in this state, when we should only have one.

Senator Perkins believes that we need to work to ensure New York State has the highest standards with respect to public safety.

He closed his letter with the following call: "Governor, I propose that we work in concert right now to identify immediate funding sources and craft legislation that ratifies the hallmark justice principles of videotaped interrogations—to empower the reminder of agencies who do not presently have the appropriate technological equipment—while buttressing and enhancing those that already have implemented this cardinal policy. Working together, I am entirely confident we can move forward in the name of the Central Park Five and others like them to ensure that no one ever suffers a multitude of massive injustices—in the form of the illegal and unethical system failure that gave rise to false, coerced confessions—ever again."