



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

## Senator Avella Secures \$100,000 in Funding For District Attorney Programs Handling Child Abuse and Combating the Exploitation of the Elderly

ANDREI D. VASILESCU   October 22, 2015

| ISSUE: **CHILD ABUSE, SENIORS**



(Queens, NY) Today, State Senator Tony Avella announced the allocation of \$100,000 in funding for the Queens County District Attorney's Office to once again support two important programs: one which provides services to children who have undergone physical and sexual abuse, and one which combats the rise of fraudulent activities exploiting the elderly. Last month, Senator Avella met with District Attorney Richard A. Brown and

discussed how the funding the Senator allocated will be distributed and the ways in which these programs service Queens residents.

Part of the funding will be provided to the Queens Child Advocacy Center (CAC), which provides unparalleled services to children who have experienced physical or sexual abuse. The Center was established as a collaborative effort between the District Attorney's Office, Safe Horizons, the LIJ Health Care System and the New York City Police Department. The goal was to create a singular hub of services rather than have traumatized children undergo the stress of multiple interviews and settings that might dissuade them from seeking help. The funding Senator Avella secured will provide a special Assistant District Attorney specifically committed to support the CAC.

The remaining portion of the funding will go towards the Elder Fraud Unit which combats the financial exploitation of the elderly. Various scams specifically target senior citizens and, as they have increased in frequency, the DA's Office will appropriate staff to create awareness, and encourage senior citizens to come forward as victims to make use of the services provided by the Elder Fraud Unit. According to the DA's Office, these scams include "telemarketing and consumer scams, credit card fraud, identity theft, caregiver financial crimes, 'sweetheart' scams and mortgage fraud." The funding will assist in staffing a special Assistant District Attorney from the DA's Office to focus on this crucial program.

"I cannot stress enough how vital the Queens Child Advocacy Center and the Elder Fraud Unit are for our Borough. The people coming to their offices have experienced trauma and have felt vulnerable and these programs ensure that they find the help they seek. I'm more than happy to secure funding for the Queens County District Attorney's Office so that these programs can continue serving the community and setting a high standard for other districts," **said State Senator Tony Avella.**

"I commend Senator Avella for his efforts in obtaining this funding that will be used to combat fraud and abuse against two of our most vulnerable populations – children and seniors. In Queens we have long been committed to protecting and seeking justice for those who cannot speak for themselves. I am certain that Senator Avella's generous allocation of funds will add greatly to our efforts," **said Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown.**