



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

Senator Nozzolio Responds to Disturbing Memo From The New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO March 30, 2016

| ISSUE: **CRIME VICTIMS**



Senator Mike Nozzolio, Chairman of the New York State Codes Committee, who also served for over a decade as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Crime Victims, Crime and Corrections, today was joined by other advocates against domestic violence in voicing sharp criticism of a memo from the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV) for their opposition to the Domestic Violence Prevention Act, also known as “Brittany’s Law”.

Dale Driscoll, whose daughter, Helen and granddaughter Brittany were brutally and savagely murdered by an individual with a history of domestic violence, has worked with Senator Nozzolio to create the Domestic Violence Prevention Act. “The memo released earlier this month by the NYSCADV presents a very biased, patently false and hurtful narrative about Brittany’s Law and my efforts to prevent other families from suffering the kind of emotional loss my family has suffered,” said Dale Driscoll.

“This so-called advocacy group appears to be more concerned with the welfare of those individuals who actually **inflict** violence against the innocent victims of domestic violence. The memo is callously insensitive to domestic violence victims, is disheartening, hypocritical and emotionally traumatizing to those who have suffered harm and serious injury from the violent perpetrators that this Coalition is unbelievably now trying to protect,” said Senator Nozzolio.

“It is extremely unfortunate, but this organization, which receives substantial taxpayer dollars, has lost its way. Shielding violent abusers defies all logic and reason and for the NYSCADV to suggest that remaining unaware of previous domestic violence acts would make a potential victim safer, makes no sense,” continued Dale Driscoll.

“Among the more ridiculously absurd assertions, the NYSCADV claims that potential victims are at greater risk if they obtain information that lets them know they are in a relationship with a person previously convicted of domestic violence,” admonished Dale Driscoll.

“Unfortunately, it appears that the NYSCADV is more preoccupied with protecting criminals, as they actively oppose Brittany’s Law which at its core is about protecting victims by

empowering them with information,” continued Senator Nozzolio.

Brittany’s Law is named for 12-year-old Brittany Passalacqua. Brittany and her mother Helen Buchel were brutally murdered by Helen’s boyfriend, a violent convicted felon, at their home in Geneva in 2009. The perpetrator had been released early from prison after serving only 2 ½ years of his sentence for violently assaulting his infant daughter, from a previous relationship. The nature of his crime was unknown to Helen and her family, the creation of a domestic violence offender registry would have made these previous acts public.

Senator Nozzolio has continued his efforts to enact the measure into law and has worked with law enforcement officials, crime victims’ advocates, and Dale Driscoll and Joan Tandle, Brittany Passalacqua's grandmothers. Brittany’s Law has passed the New York State Senate every year beginning in 2011 with an average of twenty bi-partisan cosponsors. Democrat Assemblymembers and bill sponsors, Aileen Gunther, Marcos Crespo and Matthew Titone have been staunch advocates and partners to Senator Nozzolio in their bi-partisan efforts to see Brittany’s Law pass in both houses of the New York State Legislature.

“Brittany’s Law is a preventative measure, our goal is to prevent cases of domestic violence before they occur,” said Dale Driscoll. “Police officers, the court system, and the NYSCADV all have information about prior domestic violence incidences, why can’t victims and potential victims,” Driscoll continued. “The implementation of a Domestic Violence registry would inform potential victims that they are at risk and greatly reduce the cases of domestic violence in New York State.”

“Domestic violence affects all races, religions, ages and classes; it does not discriminate. In the United States, every nine seconds a woman is assaulted or beaten,” said Senator Nozzolio. “By putting new safeguards in place to track violent offenders and keep our communities

informed of their whereabouts, Brittany's Law will undoubtedly save lives. Rather than focusing on protecting the rights of criminals, NYSCADV should be joining our efforts to protect the rights of victims by passing Brittany's Law and enacting tougher sentencing laws for violent criminals, and reinforcing laws to protect women and children from domestic violence," concluded Senator Nozzolio.