



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

## Will New York be the last state in the nation to pass Raise the Age?

SENATOR VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY March 31, 2017

| ISSUE: **RAISE THE AGE, JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM, CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM**



As a proud New Yorker, I am disappointed our progressive state continues to lag behind the nation in criminal justice reform. The current battle to pass Raise the Age in New York State exemplifies the struggles I have encountered throughout my career in the Legislature.

In each instance where bills that I have sponsored - legalizing needle exchange programs, reversing statutes to allow for the sale and possession of the non-prescription hypodermic needles to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, banning female genital mutilation, removing barriers for the formerly incarcerated to receive their barbering and cosmetology licenses,

prohibiting the shackling of a pregnant women in prison, preventing law enforcement from using the possession of “condoms as evidence” as criminal offenses related to prostitution – have encountered immediate apprehension, resistance and often rejection. However, we have usually been able to turn the tide; gaining support through education, advocacy and building grassroots coalitions to create enough momentum to bring these issues to the forefront in the legislative process.

This year, the **Raise the Age** battle is in the same vein. After years of working on this issue, we now stand on the eve of changing the law in New York State as it relates to how children and youth up to the age of 18 are treated in the criminal justice system.

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*Our children deserve more than half-measures. They deserve not to have past mistakes keep them from educational, employment and housing opportunities for the rest of their lives. They deserve not to be held in Rikers Island for years, while awaiting trial, often for misdemeanor charges or because they could not afford to make bail.*

**As budget negotiations continue, I call on the Governor and Senate Majority Coalition to stand with the Senate Democratic Conference, Speaker Heastie and the Assembly Democrats and the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislative Caucus members to support S. 4157 and Raise The Age Right.**

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## 2017-S4157

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Relates to raising the age for prosecution of certain crimes

February 03, 2017

In Senate Committee [Judiciary](#)

Sponsored by [Velmanette Montgomery](#)

Do you support this bill?