



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

## Senate Passes Comprehensive Legislation To Crack Down On Rise Of Gang Violence In New York

JOHN J. FLANAGAN May 8, 2017

| ISSUE: **ANTI-GANG BILL**



The New York State Senate today passed necessary legislation to fight the deadly criminal behavior of gangs throughout New York. The bill (S2410), sponsored by Senator Martin Golden (22nd Senate District), creates the “Criminal Street Gang Enforcement and Prevention Act” to better prosecute gang violence and stop gang recruitment through proactive community outreach.

Senate Majority Leader John J. Flanagan said, “Neighborhoods that have been particularly

hard hit by gang violence on Long Island and in communities across the state need better resources to help eliminate gangs and the victimization of those in their wake. Senator Golden's bill takes a comprehensive approach to protect our families by preventing vulnerable young people from being recruited by gangs and strengthening our laws to break up violent and dangerous gang activity."

Senator Golden said, "As a former New York City Police Officer, I know firsthand that the presence of gangs on the streets of New York have, and continue to, destroy communities, destroy schools, and destroy families. It is time that we create stricter penalties, along with educational programs, to reduce gang violence across New York State. We must not only work to prevent the formation of gangs, but we should penalize them, track them, and educate them so the dangers they cause on our streets can be eliminated."

Gang violence in urban and suburban areas throughout New York has increased, and the rise of MS-13 – who have claimed at least 11 lives in less than a year – demonstrates a need for a more comprehensive method of tackling gangs. This bill would not only strengthen the legal options available to prosecute street gangs, but would also help address many root causes of gang recruitment and growth.

Senator Elaine Phillips (7th Senate District), cosponsor of the legislation, said, "Gangs are brutally and mercilessly preying on people across New York State, and they must be stopped. No community should ever have to fear horrific acts of violence like those which took place on Long Island. This legislation is an aggressive, comprehensive approach that will help put violent gang members behind bars and keep children from joining these gangs in the first place. The Assembly should join the Senate in acting on this legislation and providing these new tools to protect our communities."

For the first time ever, the legislation legally defines criminal street gangs in New York's penal statutes, giving prosecutors more options when charging offenders. Classifying and identifying this type of criminal activity will also help law enforcement better track gangs. Penalties are increased and new felonies are created for individuals who benefit from gang activity, participate in gang activity, and recruit youth or adults to participate in gang activities.

A new Criminal Street Gang Prevention Fund would also be established to support violence prevention and gang crime deterrence services provided by not-for-profit organizations. The measure would be funded partially through forfeited assets obtained following convictions for gang activity.

In addition, schools would consult with the state Division Criminal Justice Services to implement a model curriculum focused on gang violence prevention. This will help educators interact in a positive manner with children and their parents to assist in developing positive values, self-esteem, knowledge, and skills that can lead to productive, gang-free, and drug-free lives.

This bill will be sent to the Assembly, where it is sponsored by Codes Committee Chair Joseph R. Lentol (50th Assembly District).

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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**2017-S2410**

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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
- 

Enacts the New York state criminal street gang act

January 13, 2017

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Martin J. Golden**

Do you support this bill?