



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

## Senate approves bill authorized by Senator Murphy that keeps Sex Offenders off the Internet

TERRENCE MURPHY June 12, 2017

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Albany, NY - Sex offenders no longer have to lurk on street corners or prowl playgrounds to find their next victim. Today, they can sit in the comfort of their homes while trolling for their next under-aged target. As the father of three young children, Senator Terrence Murphy has urged his fellow senators to pass stronger legislation that will allow law enforcement to monitor the actions of sex offenders more closely.

In March 2017, a level 3 offender living in Katonah was arrested for allegedly convincing a 14-year-old North Carolina girl to send him sexually explicit videos and photos. This reprehensible act happened the same month the offender's parole supervision ended. His parole restrictions included a ban on internet use.

In response to this arrest and others, Senator Murphy has proposed legislation (S5321) that would prohibit convicted level 2 and 3 sex offenders from using the internet to access pornographic sites promoting sexual relations with minors or sites for social networking. Violation of the act will be classified as a class D felony.

"Our law enforcement agencies need more effective tools to help protect the most vulnerable people in our community from being preyed upon by sex offenders," said Senator Murphy. "This bill will ensure that sex offenders required to register for life can no longer use the internet to threaten the health and safety of our children."

Peekskill Police Chief Eric Johansen said, "The internet is a virtual neighborhood and like any neighborhood certain protections are necessary to prevent people from becoming victims of crime and sexual predators. This bill being proposed by Senator Murphy will go a long way towards protecting our communities from some of the most dangerous criminals, undoubtedly making it safer for those who legitimately utilize the internet."

"Sex offenders are highly likely to be repeat offenders. Often quite skilled at their sick craft, they have the ability to create a false persona on the internet to victimize again, and again. This needs to be stopped," said Yorktown Police Chief Robert Noble. "Stronger laws are needed to assist law enforcement in our battle to detect and apprehend sexual predators. I support Senator Murphy in his efforts to protect all citizens, especially our children, from these sexual predators."

Under the current penal and executive law, a mandatory condition of probation or parole for an individual required to register as a sex offender is a prohibition on certain internet use. While on probation or parole, sex offenders over the age of eighteen are prohibited from using the internet to access pornographic material, social networking sites or communicate with individuals under eighteen years of age for the purpose of promoting sexual relations.

This bill seeks to strengthen current protections against online predators by conforming current prohibitions to the length of time a sex offender is required to register with the Division of Criminal Justice Services; for level two and level three offenders the prohibition on certain internet uses would be for life.

The bill passed the Senate with bipartisan support 59-2.