



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Senator Murphy Sponsors Bill to Strengthen School Security and Keep Students Safe From Gun-Related Violence

TERRENCE MURPHY March 26, 2018

| ISSUE: **PROTECTING OUR STUDENTS, SCHOOL SECURITY, GUN VIOLENCE, GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION, GUN LAWS**



Albany, NY - Parkland, Florida. Las Vegas, Nevada. Newtown, Connecticut. We have seen the photos of the families, classmates, and co-workers with their heads bowed in mourning for those killed in mass shootings, and we have heard impassioned stories from survivors begging for someone to stem the tide of gun-related acts of violence flooding the country. Senator Terrence Murphy and his fellow Senators have responded, passing a comprehensive safety plan that will improve security and keep our loved ones safe at schools and other

venues.

The bill, sponsored by Senator Murphy (S7813A), defines school shootings as terrorism and vastly improves the methods of gathering of intelligence to protect schools against attack. This bill enables individuals to be charged with committing an act of terrorism if they knowingly and unlawfully discharge a firearm within 1,000 feet of a school, a place of worship, a mass gathering of 25 or more people, or a business and it protects these type of sites under counter-terrorism laws.

The bill also codifies the operations of the New York State Intelligence Center, making the Center responsible for the collection, processing, analysis, dissemination, sharing, and maintenance of intelligence information that will aid in detecting, preventing, investigating and responding to acts of terrorism, including school shootings. The Center would cooperate with the state Division of Homeland Security among other state, local and federal government agencies, including schools and the state department of education for the first time as part of that collaboration. The bill also requires the establishment of a new Buffalo office to the current fusion centers in Albany and New York City and increase the information-sharing and analysis capabilities of the state.

"Given the continued acts of extreme violence that have needlessly cost the lives of innocent victims, we need strong legislation that will protect the lives of our children and families, whether they are at school, attending a concert or in a place of worship," said Senator Murphy. "This legislation rightfully classifies premeditated acts of violence against large groups of people as terrorism and allows law enforcement to treat these threats as such. In addition, it gives the New York Intelligence Center the tools it needs to collect, investigate and share information with all stakeholders that will ultimately prevent future tragedies from occurring."

Anthony A. Scarpino, Jr. Westchester District Attorney said, "This bill adds schools, houses of worship and businesses as protected areas under our terrorism statute that will give us another avenue to prosecute individuals who threaten to harm these institutions. Intelligence sharing among all levels of law enforcement is critical to our ability to detect and respond to these types of threats. I applaud the bills' focus on enhancing the State's intelligence network."

The Senate's comprehensive school safety package includes more than a dozen bills and is a strong response to the senseless violence we have witnessed in schools across the nation and will prevent those incidents from happening here. The bills increase the ability of schools to hire qualified security personnel; create new state funding mechanisms for infrastructure investments that improve school safety; increase access to school-based mental health services; expand state actions and intelligence coordination to protect schools against attack, and strengthen penalties for crimes on school grounds.

In the last year alone, the Senate successfully extended a 10 percent increase in building aid for schools to fund additional security measures like door hardening, metal detectors, and other related infrastructure. The Senate also secured \$25 million in new funding for non-public schools, day cares, and community centers at risk for hate crimes and \$15 million for non-public schools to increase their security. Initiatives like these will continue to be a part of this coming year's budget negotiations.

Additional safety measures are also expected to be unveiled next week as part of the conference's Security Agenda.

Senator Murphy's bill and the other bills in the school safety plan will be sent to the

Assembly.