



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

Senator Serrano Fights For Child Victims Act

JOSE M. SERRANO April 1, 2018

| ISSUE: **CHILD VICTIMS ACT**

Last month, my Senate Democratic colleagues and I fought for the Child Victims Act be passed into law. Currently, the Child Victims Act is included in the Governor's budget proposals, and we have urged the Senate Republican Majority to keep this legislation in the final, enacted State Budget. The Child Victims Act has the support of Governor Cuomo, the Senate Democratic Conference, and the Assembly Democratic Majority, yet the Senate Republican Majority has repeatedly blocked passage of this legislation.

The Child Victims Act (sponsored by my Senate Democratic colleague Brad Hoylman), would make it possible for victims of child sexual abuse to have access to justice by extending the deadlines for criminal prosecution and for filing civil lawsuits. The Child Victims Act (Senate Bill 6575) would:

- Amend the statute of limitations for prosecution of sex crimes to begin when the victim turns 23, rather than 18;
- Amend the statute of limitations for civil actions based on sex crimes to allow a victim to sue until they turn 50;
- Create a one-year window under which presently time-barred civil claims are revived;
- Simplify the process for child victims to bring suit against government entities; and
- Provide for training for judges handling cases involving the sexual abuse of children.

In 2017, the Assembly passed A5885A, an identical measure, by a vote of 139 to 7.

According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, one in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused by the time they turn 18, and nearly three quarters of all reported sexual assault victims are children. Additionally, reports have revealed that 73% of child victims do not tell anyone for at least a year and 45% of child abuse victims do not tell anyone for at least five years. By the time that victims recognize that they have been abused and are able to tell someone about it, in a large number of cases the statute of limitations has already expired. To address these concerns, and to help the survivors of this crime seek justice, the Senate Democrats have led the fight in the Senate to pass the Child Victims Act.