



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Monica R. Martinez

## Senator Martinez Continues to Fight for Long Island in Albany After Budget Finalization

MONICA R. MARTINEZ April 1, 2019

| ISSUE: **CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM, 2019-20 BUDGET**

(Albany, NY) The 2019 State Budget approved on April 1 ends cash bail requirements for all misdemeanors and most felonies, allowing potentially dangerous and violent criminals to be released into the public without proper vetting or allowing for judicial consideration of the dangerousness of the accused.

In response to these changes, Senator Monica R. Martinez plans on introducing legislation to address various serious threats to public safety. For example, the bail reform measures in this budget will allow suspects charged with violent crimes against animals to be released on their own recognizance. This must be addressed in subsequent legislation. Animal cruelty is a known precursor to domestic violence; according to a National Coalition Against Domestic Violence study, 85.4% of female victims, and 63% of child victims, also reported incidents of pet abuse when arriving at domestic violence shelters. For these reasons, Senator Martinez will be supporting the future inclusion of these crimes to the eligibility list for bail and pretrial detention to keep New Yorkers safe from those who are willing to commit violent crimes, both against humans or animals.

In addition, suspects charged with crimes such as selling drugs on school grounds, most burglaries and robberies, and most general drug offenses will now only be issued appearance

tickets to appear in court at a later date, including offenders from out of state or from other countries. Furthermore, if the suspect fails to appear at the mandated appearance, a 48 hour window is enforced before a judge is able to issue a warrant for arrest, creating a potential flight risk potential.

“It is my strong belief that we must hold the perpetrators of violent crimes accountable for their actions, and that we must take into consideration the concerns of our law enforcement and our constituents. I want the residents of the Third Senatorial District to know that the seriousness of these measures are not lost on me. Though I am pleased to have narrowed the scope of crimes that are exempt from bail, I remain committed to enacting future legislation that will ultimately protect the most vulnerable populations that I represent,” said Monica R. Martinez

Senator Martinez also adamantly advocated for, and successfully secured, \$1 million dollars in funding for gang violence prevention programs in Long Island, which will give children healthier options and hopefully deter them from negative behaviors in the Third District.

#### **Tuition Assistance Program:**

Earlier in the year, the Senate passed legislation to expand access to the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) program for middle-income families in the state by raising the income eligibility level from \$80,000 to \$95,000. In addition, this bill increases the minimum award a student can receive each year from \$500 to \$750. This measure has yet to be passed in the Assembly, and was not included in the budget, however it is paramount that it comes to the floor in order to make higher education more accessible to hardworking families in New York State.

“As a former educator, I believe it is vital to ensure that a college education is an attainable goal for every student, and that every student is afforded equal opportunity to a bright and

successful future.” stated Senator Martinez.

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