



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara promotes 'Justice Agenda' for crime victims

THOMAS F. O'MARA April 30, 2019

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The proposed “Victims’ Justice Agenda” represents a comprehensive package of Senate Republican-sponsored legislation to reform the parole system to keep violent criminals behind bars without parole and ease the parole process for suffering victims, families and the public.

Albany, N.Y., April 30—State Senator Tom O’Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) today called for the enactment of a “Victims’ Justice Agenda” to help offset ongoing actions by the state Parole Board and Democratic legislators that O’Mara says points to a “dangerous and disturbing habit of favoring cop killers and other violent criminals over crime victims.”

“Governor Cuomo’s Parole Board is releasing cop killers. Democratic senators are pushing legislation to grant parole hearings to dangerous inmates sentenced to life without parole. It is a dangerous and disturbing habit of favoring cop killers and other violent criminals over crime victims and their families and loved ones. It’s alarming to district attorneys, law enforcement officers and criminal justice experts, and we need to stand up, speak out and work against it,” said O’Mara, the ranking Senate Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

O’Mara highlighted the following actions as the reason he’s joining his Senate GOP colleagues to call for the enactment of a “Victims’ Justice Agenda”:

- > Last year, the state Parole Board granted parole to Herman Bell, who had spent the previous four decades behind bars after he murdered two New York City police officers in 1971.
- > Earlier this month, the board granted parole to Judith Clark, a radical domestic terrorist and member of the Weather Underground who in 1981 was convicted of felony murder for her role in a Rockland County robbery that led to the murder of two police officers and a Brink’s security guard.
- > Legislation sponsored by Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Brad Hoylman (D-Manhattan) that would make New York prison inmates automatically eligible for parole once they reach the age of 55, even if they are serving a sentence of life without parole.

The proposed “Victims’ Justice Agenda” represents a comprehensive package of Senate Republican-sponsored legislation to reform the parole system to keep violent criminals behind bars without parole and ease the parole process for suffering victims, families and the public. It includes actions to:

- > require unanimous consent of the Parole Board to grant an inmate release;
- > enact the “Domestic Violence Protection Act” requiring the registration of violent felony offenders;
- > increase, from 24 to 60 months, the time between parole hearings for violent felony offenders; and
- > require Parole Board members to review all relevant victim impact statements prior to conducting a parole hearing.