



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator Shelley Mayer, County Executive George Latimer and others Celebrate the Signing of Gun Buyback Legislation

SHELLEY B. MAYER December 18, 2019

| ISSUE: **GUN BUYBACK PROGRAM, GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION**



YONKERS, NY -- On Wednesday, December 18, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, State Senator Shelley Mayer, County Executive George Latimer, the Yonkers Police Department, and other elected officials representing the City of Yonkers, together with the family of Michael Nolan, gathered at Yonkers Police Department Headquarters to celebrate the signing of statewide gun buyback legislation based upon the successful program of the

Yonkers Police Department.

[S.2449/A.2685](#) is modeled on the successful [City of Yonkers' Gun Buyback Program](#), and authorizes the New York State Police to establish guidelines and regulations to encourage the creation of gun buyback programs throughout the state. The new law also creates a statewide gun buyback fund to assist municipalities with the cost of the program.

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, 35th District, said, "In just our first year as the new Senate Democratic Majority, we achieved major victories in the fight against gun violence. This statewide gun buyback program, inspired by the successful Yonkers program to get guns off of our streets, will help keep communities around New York safer. I applaud my friend and colleague Senator Shelley Mayer for sponsoring this legislation and being a leader on gun safety efforts."

"Thanks to the leadership of Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, New York State is a leader in gun violence prevention measures to protect our families and communities from the scourge of gun violence," said **State Senator Shelley B. Mayer, 37th District**. "I am grateful that one of the measures that we passed this year in the state legislature was my bill to take the successful Yonkers' Gun Buyback Program statewide. The loss of Michael Nolan was a tragedy for his family and for the City of Yonkers. I commend the Nolan family for channeling their deep grief into positive action. Congratulations to the Yonkers Police Department for creating a unique, reliable, and successful gun buyback program that will now be used as a model statewide."

Included at the ceremony was the family of Michael Nolan who passed away on October 8, 2015 after having been gunned down three weeks earlier while outside of a Burger King parking lot on Central Park Avenue in Yonkers. Michael was a graduate of Saunders Trades and Technical High School. A 6' 8" left-handed pitcher and star athlete, Michael had been

drafted to play for the Oakland A's. Since Michael's passing, Jimmy Nolan, Jr. and the Nolan family have been channeling their grief into positive action to ensure that his passing would not be in vain. The Nolan family made several trips to Albany to press for the passage of the bill to take the Yonkers' Gun Buyback Program statewide.

"Gun violence is a national epidemic that rips apart families and communities," said **Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano**. "We need to take substantive action and I applaud Senator Mayer for taking the Yonkers Police Department's lead in putting this effective program into place. I am proud of the work our police has done locally and look forward to seeing this program save lives statewide."

County Executive George Latimer said: "What we are celebrating here is a story of turning a tragedy into a triumph. This legislation will result in more guns in New York State being taken off of the streets – and that alone will save lives. Gun violence is an epidemic in our nation and I am proud to be here today with the great men and women of the Yonkers Police Department, my colleagues in Government and the courageous Nolan family to take a stand against it."

Yonkers Police Commissioner John J. Mueller said, "Too many families in New York are devastated by gun violence. Our successful gun tips hotline program is designed to remove illegal handguns from our streets in an effort to save lives and enhance community safety – to date, over 200 guns have been recovered. We are proud that the State is modeling their program based on what we do in the City of Yonkers."

Jimmy Nolan, Jr., brother of Michael Nolan and gun violence prevention advocate, said, "It is a bittersweet time with the program going statewide. It's great because it's a program with great success that we have worked extremely hard on, but hard because I wish I didn't have to join it for the reason that I did. I am forever thankful to the City of Yonkers, Yonkers

Police Department, and all of our elected officials for allowing me to join the program and take it to new levels to help protect many people and keep our community safe. I know my brother Michael would be very proud and honored that the Yonkers Gun Tip Hotline is the first of its kind in New York State. This fight to protect people from illegal gun violence is a part of my brother's legacy, and I will not stop fighting for him or anyone else. Michael was robbed of so much, but they will not take his legacy from him, and I will make sure of that!"

Assemblymember Nader Sayegh, 90th District, said, "The signing of S2449/A2685 allowing for statewide Gun Buyback Legislation is a tribute to the life and legacy of Michael Nolan; a Yonkers resident lost to gun violence. I commend the Yonkers Police Department's successful 'Gun Buyback Model Program,' which will now become statewide and potentially national. We are proud of the Nolan family for their tireless efforts in our campaign against gun violence and its detrimental impact on many families and communities all across our state and Nation."

Yonkers City Council President Mike Khader said, "I applaud the signing of statewide gun buyback legislation, and take pride knowing Yonkers paved the way for this important and necessary measure. Far too many have fallen victim to senseless gun violence, and it is time for lawmakers to put forth preventative measures, like this bill, to protect our families and children from such crime. I am sorry that the Nolan family has suffered firsthand, but am grateful that they chose to use their tragedy in a positive and impactful way."

Yonkers City Councilmember John Rubbo said "I will always applaud good, common-sense legislation. Yonkers has successfully run a voluntary gun buyback program and has helped remove unwanted firearms from our streets. I am proud that a Yonkers program is being used as the foundation for something now being introduced state-wide. I thank Senators Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Shelley Mayer for delivering this program in Michael Nolan's memory and I commend them for creating the necessary funding to properly implement this

program.”

County Legislator Christopher Johnson said, “Removing guns from the street is extremely important. The Yonkers Police Department gun buyback program and gun tip hotline are some of the tools we use to do this important work. I applaud Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Senator Shelley Mayer for prioritizing anti-gun violence legislation and making the streets of New York a safer place for us all.”

County Legislator David Tubiolo said, "I applaud Senator Shelley Mayer for always leading us in times of crises, which is exactly what we are going through with gun violence in our country. The Statewide Gun Buyback, law modeled after the City of Yonkers' Gun Buyback Program, is another step forward to preventing another horrific gun violence crisis. We will continue to work with each other and all levels of government to protect the public."

The bill, sponsored in the Assembly by Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal (AD-67, Manhattan).