



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

Tedisco, Stec & Walsh Call for New Bill to Protect 1st Responders from Being Targeted by Criminals Under Controversial Bail/Discovery Law

SENATOR JIM TEDISCO January 16, 2020



As the controversial bail and discovery reform law continues to see a revolving door of individuals charged with violent crimes being released back out into the community, Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C,I,REF-Glenville), Assemblyman Dan Stec (R,C,I-Queensbury) and Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh (R,C,I-Ballston) today introduced new legislation to protect the privacy of emergency first responders and their families from retaliation and becoming crime victims under the discovery portion of the law.

The ill-conceived discovery reform law, which was passed in the dark of the night in the state budget, without holding public hearings and getting input from all stakeholders, overhauled the discovery process to require an expedited timeline to provide police reports, radio transmissions, body-worn and dash-cam video, and witness names and contact information related to the prosecution of a crime to defendants within 15 days of arraignment.

Current law protects law enforcement personnel from the disclosure of name and contact information in this process to safeguard them and their families from threats and intimidation. However, the same protection was not extended to emergency first responders such as firefighters and EMS workers, who are often the first ones to provide life-saving services at emergency crime scenes.

Tedisco, Stec and Walsh's legislation ([S.7280](#)) would protect the privacy of all emergency first responders from having their personal information shared during discovery.

"Several first responder groups have contacted me with their concerns about this terrible new bail and discovery reform law and the impact it will have on their ability to recruit and retain personnel," said Senator Jim Tedisco, who is also sponsoring legislation for a full repeal of the bail and discovery reform law ([S.6849/A.8855](#)) and to give judges greater discretion on bail ([S.6861/A.9047](#)). "Violent criminals and vicious gangs like MS-13 are known to not only intimidate witnesses but also to murder them and their loved ones. Our emergency first responders are always there to treat anyone in need of care, no matter whether they've committed a crime or not. These first responders are already challenged in their ability to recruit new members and this discovery law just makes it more difficult for them because our community heroes want to help people and save lives – not see themselves as the victims."

“Our first emergency first responders are prepared to put their own lives on the line but they never bargained for the possibility that their families could become targets. We can’t allow open season on our heroic emergency service personnel and see them victimized by predators who will take advantage of this new discovery reform law to threaten their lives and their family’s well-being,” said Senator Tedisco.

“We’re barely two weeks into 2020, and it’s clear the so-called bail ‘reform’ is a disaster that leaves law enforcement and first responders more vulnerable than ever,” said Assemblyman Dan Stec. “We need to take action immediately. That’s why I’m proud to sponsor a bill that protects these heroes of our communities from dangerous criminals, who, thanks to the new laws, now have access to their personal information. The men and women who put their lives on the line for our well-being deserve the maximum amount of protection the law can provide. This legislation goes a long way toward accomplishing exactly that.”

“It is hard enough to recruit volunteer firefighters, EMS workers and other first responders as it is, and who would want to expose themselves or their family members to possible contact with criminal defendants,” said Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh. “Like law enforcement officers, firefighters and EMS workers who are simply doing their jobs deserve anonymity from this type of potential scrutiny or risk, and I am proud to co-sponsor legislation with Sen. Jim Tedisco and Assemblyman Dan Stec that would ensure the protections that they deserve.”

RELATED LEGISLATION

2019-S7280

- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
 - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
 - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Relates to ensuring privacy protections for all emergency personnel present at a crime scene

January 15, 2020

In Senate Committee Codes

Sponsored by James Tedisco

Do you support this bill?