



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

## Area legislators, local law enforcement hold 'Repeal Bail Reform' rally at the State Capitol

THOMAS F. O'MARA February 4, 2020

| ISSUE: **CONTROVERSIAL BAIL REFORM**



At today's rally, lawmakers and law enforcement officials alike charged that the "No Bail" reforms have created a system that releases violent criminals back into the community without supervision and risks the safety of their victims, the victim's family members, trial witnesses, and others. The overriding goal, they said, is to restore public safety as priority No. 1.

**Albany, N.Y., February 4**—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats), Assemblyman Phil Palmesano (R,C,I-Corning), Assemblywoman Marjorie Byrnes (R,C-Caledonia), Assemblyman Joseph Giglio (R,C,I-Gowanda) and Assemblyman Chris Friend (R,C,I-Big Flats) today joined

legislative colleagues and law enforcement leaders at a “Repeal Bail Reform” rally at the State Capitol.

Steuben County Sheriff James Allard, Steuben County Undersheriff John McNelis, Steuben County District Attorney Brooks Baker, Bath Police Chief Chad Mullen and Hornell Mayor John Buckley attended today’s rally.

Representatives of the state Sheriffs Association, the District Attorneys Association of New York, and the NYS Association of Chiefs of Police were also on hand.

**Senator O’Mara**, the top Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee, said, “Every day this ‘No Bail’ law stays in place risks another tragedy. Governor Cuomo and the Democrat majorities in the Senate and Assembly should do something besides letting a dangerous and unworkable criminal justice system keep playing out at the expense of innocent victims and safe communities. It is irresponsible to ignore public safety. It is long past time to put a stop to this daily madness and start work on a more commonsense, safer and workable solution that achieves the necessary reforms but that protects public safety as priority number one.”

**Assemblyman Palmesano** said, “Not a single day passes by without yet another tragic story of a dangerous individual being released to the public, including serial, repeat offenders. Make no mistake about it, this is the most pressing issue facing our state today because we are talking about the public safety of every citizen in our state - upstate, downstate, everywhere! We can promote fairness in our criminal justice system without totally compromising public safety. We repeatedly warned our colleagues who supported this bill that it was dangerous. Any failure to take immediate action to solve this will continue to compromise the public safety of all New Yorkers.”

**Assemblywoman Byrnes** said, “We elect our Judges because we trust their judgement and discretion. Every case is different. Our judges need to be allowed to make appropriate decisions on bail based upon the facts before them.”

**Assemblyman Giglio** said, “New Jersey spent three years studying how their laws would impact the public. They allocated funding and offered training to ensure they didn’t end up like us, with dangerous individuals abusing the law. What’s worse, New York State’s own Office of Court Administration warned against these very changes well before they were rushed into implementation. This is a mess and has had red flags all over it from day one.”

**Assemblyman Friend** said, “New York’s Bail Reform continues to endanger the people of New York, our law enforcement community and victims of crime. Since January 1, many criminals have expressed joy at being set free to recommit the very crime they were arrested for. Domestic violence victims are being revictimized and are fearful to present testimony since it is no longer confidential. In contrast to New York, New Jersey provided funding and training to implement its version of criminal justice reform over three years not overnight. It’s an outrage that New York continues to disrespect law-abiding citizens. This law needs to be repealed and start over with public hearings from stakeholders across the state.”

**Mayor Buckley** said, “The primary role of government is to protect citizens, not put them in harm's way. This dangerous and misguided legislation needs to be repealed.”

The new “No Bail” law took effect on January 1, 2020. Not a single Republican state legislator voted in favor of the reforms when they were enacted last year. The controversial actions pushed by Cuomo and legislative Democrats have raised alarms throughout New York’s law enforcement community. Among other provisions, the reforms eliminated cash bail and pretrial detention for nearly all misdemeanors and nonviolent felony cases, resulting in the mandatory release of 90% of those arrested, regardless of their criminal history.

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O'Mara is encouraging Southern Tier and Finger Lakes residents who oppose the law to sign a "Repeal Bail Reform" petition on his Senate website [HERE](#).