



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Acknowledges Elder Abuse Awareness Day

JIM RANNEY June 16, 2021

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Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) joined state and local officials in marking World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) on June 15, 2021, kicking off a month-long effort to promote an understanding of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue. The Western New York WEAAD campaign is a collaboration of New York State, the Erie County District Attorney's Office, the City of Buffalo, the Erie County Council on Elder Abuse, Live Well Erie County, and Center for Elder Law & Justice.

The theme of this year's campaign is "*Reach Out, Speak Out*," encouraging people to check in with seniors, who have been particularly isolated during the past 14 months.

"The pandemic presented challenges for everyone, but the impact on our seniors has been especially harsh," Senator Gallivan said. "We need to reassure them that they are not alone and there are agencies and organizations in the community that can help. I am proud to work with the Center for Elder Law and Justice to help guard against acts of elder abuse, whether it be physical, psychological or financial abuse. In the Senate, I have sponsored legislation to make sure those who abuse and exploit our senior citizens do not go unpunished and I will continue to work with my partners in government and law enforcement to protect those who cannot protect themselves."

The partner organizations are making a concerted effort to highlight the issue of elder abuse, and the resources available to older adults. Thanks to Meals on Wheels and FeedMore of WNY, information will be included in meal deliveries during the month of June. Also included will be Caring Cards, collected from area schoolchildren to share with seniors at various locations. Any school or other organization that would like to participate in the Caring Cards Challenge can do so year-round, by contacting the Center for Elder Law & Justice.

"The last year has been especially challenging for older adults, particularly those in nursing homes or assisted living facilities, and their families," said Karen Nicolson, CEO of Center for Elder Law & Justice. "Unfortunately, the increased isolation also means that abusive situations were reported even less than in normal times. We hope that the activities surrounding World Elder Abuse Awareness Day will encourage people to check in with friends and loved ones. Please contact our office or your local Adult Protective Services office if you believe someone may be a victim of abuse."

The organizations are collaborating on a social media campaign throughout the month of June.