



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mario R. Mattera

## Senate Republican Conference Unveils Victims' Justice Agenda

MARIO R. MATTERA July 15, 2021

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Senator Mario R. Mattera (2<sup>nd</sup> Senate District) joined with Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt and members of the Senate Republican Conference today to unveil the “Victims’ Justice Agenda,” a package of bills designed to protect crime victims and reverse the troubling rise in violent crime rates throughout New York.

“As our state continues to recover from the ongoing crisis, it is imperative that we focus on restoring common-sense to public protection. With crime rates continuing to increase, the “Victims’ Justice Agenda” will protect our families and our communities. That is essential to

helping our state build back stronger than ever and now is the time to enact policies that put the rights of our law-abiding residents first,” **said Senator Mattera.**

“In 2019, One-Party Rule in Albany started a troubling trend by putting their thumbs on the scales of justice and passing the first of their many criminal justice “reforms.” Two years later, we’ve seen it over and over again: violent criminals given nothing but comfort, and their victims given nothing but pain. If this wave of violence truly is an emergency, as the Governor recently announced, we must get back to the basics of public safety. That begins by **reversing** out-of-whack priorities that favor criminals over law-abiding New Yorkers. I am proud to stand with my colleagues in support of our continued initiatives to restore common-sense and public safety in New York,” **said Senate Republican Leader Ortt.**

The rise of violent crimes in major cities throughout New York this year follows the implementation of Democrats’ dangerous bail and discovery reforms in 2019, the disbanding of the NYPD’s “anti-crime” unit, a billion-dollar cut to New York City police funding, and an overall pro-criminal, anti-police climate fostered under all-Democrat rule.

Senate Republicans’ Victims’ Justice Agenda follows the lawmakers’ push to “Protect Those Who Protect Us” **in May**, and a Parole Reform package of bills unveiled **last month.**

Safeguarding victims is another critical part of an ongoing criminal justice agenda geared towards restoring common-sense and public safety in New York.

Keynotes of the Victims’ Justice Agenda include:

**S.3842 (Serino)** - Adds certain offenses committed by a family member to the list of crimes qualifying for bail. Protects victims of domestic violence by allowing judges more discretion in securing orders in certain cases related to domestic violence.

**S.6290 (Lanza)** – Makes hate crimes eligible for bail. **Earlier this year**, an anti-Semitic synagogue attacker in the Bronx was released without bail, after a judge overturned another court order that defied current bail reform laws.

**S.6153 (Boyle)** - Ensures repeat offenders qualify for bail and pre-trial detention when the principal has been convicted of one or more misdemeanor or felony offenses. **Earlier this year**, an Oswego man was arrested 18 times over the span of four days, on charges ranging from stealing, harassing, resisting arrest, and trespassing. None of the repeat crimes he was charged under were bail eligible, and he was only held with bail after his 18th arrest for burglary and larceny.

**S.4563 (Griffo)** – Criminalizes anti-Semitism under state human rights law – **in April**, it was revealed by the Anti-Defamation League that New York leads the nation in anti-Semitic attacks. **Recent demonstrations** in New York City have also descended into multiple hateful attacks against members of the Jewish community, in the wake of violent terrorist attacks against Israel and anti-Israel rhetoric by **some New York state legislators**.

The legislative package also includes:

**S.171 (Tedisco)** – Authorizes imposition of life imprisonment without parole sentence for persistent violent felony offenders. Persistent felons have three or more felony convictions.

**S.1521 (Tedisco)** – Relates to setting bail for defendants who pose a threat to public safety. This bill would provide judges with discretion when setting bail for dangerous defendants.

**S.1523A (Tedisco)** – Repeals bail and discovery reform.

**S.2565 (Jordan)** – Relates to making a murder as the result of a drive by shooting murder in the first degree. In the wake of the tragic murder of an 11-year-old child from Troy **in**

September 2020, Senator Jordan introduced this bill to strengthen penalties for those who terrorize innocent communities through drive-by shootings.

**S.2277 (Helming)** – Relates to requiring health care facilities to report incidents of a sexual offense to the departments of both health and education.

**S.6766 (Serino)** – Relates to protecting witnesses in criminal prosecutions from intimidation and threats.

**S.6923 (Lanza)** – Strengthens penalties for crimes committed on MTA property, similar to the hate crime statute. Random attacks and a declining quality of life on the New York City subway system have recently deterred many from riding the subway.

“As a former prosecutor and chair of the Senate Codes Committee, I repeatedly sounded the alarm on what would happen if Albany’s many criminal justice “reforms” were signed into law. A revolving door has been created for those who terrorize our communities. Violent crime has risen to levels not seen in many years. Our first responsibility as public servants is to protect public safety. We can restore common-sense now by enacting this “Victims’ Justice Agenda,”” **said Deputy Republican Leader Andrew Lanza.**

“Time and time again the Democrats in Albany refused to listen to the concerns of those who work in the criminal justice system on the disastrous bail and discovery reforms. It's no surprise that crime is out of control across the state. As a proud cosponsor of this legislation, this package prioritizes protecting crime victims, ensures that violent criminals stay off the street and supports our community heroes,” **said Senator Fred Akshar.**

“The Governor and his allies can deny it or ignore it all they want, but those who are on the front lines of our criminal justice system have repeatedly cited the so-called criminal justice ‘reforms’ and other reckless pro-criminal policies as the culprits of our current crime wave.

Tragically, the casualties at the other end of these misguided policies are crime victims and their families, who have paid a terrible price for Democrats' politically-driven agenda. The package being advanced by our conference is a blueprint for refocusing the state's priorities on the rights of victims and public safety," **said Senator George Borrello.**

"To the extent we have a public health crisis in this state tied to violent crime, Andrew Cuomo is the cause and not the solution. Our Crime Victims Package puts the focus of our criminal justice system back where it belongs – protecting our families and supporting law enforcement. The soft on crime approach favored by the Governor and his allies in the Legislature has been an abject failure and it's long past time we reversed course," **said Senator Mike Martucci.**

"Over the course of two short years, Democrat lawmakers have enacted a series of bad bills that have put the interests of criminals before those of law enforcement and crime victims to disastrous effect. Now, more than ever, we must fight back against these radical policies and promote stronger public protection laws to make New York a safer place to call home," **said Senator Anthony Palumbo.**

"One party control in Albany has advanced policies that protect criminals and attack law enforcement, which is bad for our State and our communities. Our Conference's Victims Justice Agenda package of bills focuses on public safety, supporting law enforcement, and ensuring victims' voices are heard. I am proud to stand with my Senate Republican colleagues in advancing this common-sense package of bills," **said Senator Alexis Weik.**

Earlier this month, the Governor declared a "disaster emergency on gun violence," a move that was met with mixed reaction due to his recent record on criminal justice "reforms." Though it was a long overdue acknowledgment of rising violence in areas throughout the state, the declared emergency does nothing to address Democrats' recent "reforms" or other pro-criminal, anti-cop policies and rhetoric coming from Albany.