



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Alexis Weik

NYS Senators: Pass “Billy's Law” NOW

ALEXIS WEIK March 16, 2022



State Senator Alexis Weik and her Senate Republican colleagues today joined with the father of a hero firefighter and members of law enforcement to call for changes to the state’s failing bailing laws.

The lawmakers want “arson” added back into the list of crimes for which defendants can be held on bail, citing the case of a volunteer firefighter who died at a blaze allegedly set by a serial arsonist who had been set free.

“Robberies, assaults and now arson—the long list of violent crimes resulting from Albany’s failed ‘bail reforms’ continues to grow. But it shouldn’t have to take the death of a hero volunteer firefighter to recognize that weakening our laws emboldens criminals and makes our communities less safe. We need to repeal cashless bail, give judges more discretion to detain dangerous criminals, support police and once again make public safety a priority in our state,” said Senator Weik.

The Senators were joined at a press conference held at the Brentwood FD by the father of 37-year-old William “Billy” Steinberg, an assistant fire chief who died at the scene of an arson fire. The alleged arsonist had been released by police following his arrest for setting two other fires in the same community just days earlier.

“Arson” is among 200-plus crimes that were exempted from the bail law under so-called “reforms” enacted in 2019. Since then, hundreds of dangerous criminals have been set free on Long Island, and more throughout the state, following their arrests for a host of crimes, including violent and gun-related incidents.

The Senators’ bill (S8181), “Billy’s Law” would restore arson to the list of bail-eligible crimes, and is a first step toward fully repealing the new bail laws, a move Senator Weik said would make our communities safer. The prime sponsor of the bill is Hudson Valley Sen. Mike Martucci; Sen. Weik is a cosponsor of the bill.

“There are countless reasons why the disastrous ‘bail reform’ measure passed in Albany must be repealed. Arson is a serious, life-threatening crime, and arsonists must be held responsible for their actions, to the fullest extent of the law. The State Senate and Assembly must pass this action in the name of safety for all New Yorkers, and those who wear a uniform,” said Noel DiGerolamo, President, Suffolk County PBA.