



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Anthony H. Palumbo

Palumbo, GOP Senate colleagues sound alarm on latest pro-criminal policies advancing in Albany: Republicans note that the action by Senate Democrats is being taken during Crime Victims' Rights Week

CHRIS STAZIO April 25, 2022

| ISSUE: **BAIL REFORM CRIMINAL JUSTICE, CLEAN SLATE, CRIME VICTIM ADVOCACY**



Crime is up, and communities all across New York are paying the price. Yet instead of working to make the state a safer place for law-abiding citizens and providing greater support for crime victims and their families, the Senate Majority is doubling down on their failed criminal justice policies.

As Crime Crisis Ravages New York, Senator Anthony Palumbo & Colleagues Blast Albany for Advancing Tone-Deaf, Pro-Criminals Policies

ALBANY, NY – New York State Senators Anthony Palumbo, Tom O’Mara, Fred Akshar, and Patrick M. Gallivan today sounded the alarm on the latest tone-deaf, pro-criminal policy to advance in Albany. The so-called “Clean Slate” and “Office of Expungement” bills – passed today in the Senate Codes Committee – would erase criminal records from public view and provide no protections for victims or law-abiding residents.

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“Crime is up, and communities in every corner of New York are hurting. Yet instead of working to make the state a safer place for law-abiding citizens and providing greater support for crime victims and their families, Senate Democrats are doubling down on their failed criminal justice policies. The most offensive part of their pro-criminal agenda is their reckless disregard for crime victims and the passage of these dangerous policies during National Crime Victims’ Rights Week,” said Senator Anthony Palumbo, ranking Republican on the Senate Codes Committee.

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“Another day in Albany, another set of pro-criminal policies pushed by One-Party-Rule. New York is facing a crime crisis the likes of which we haven’t seen in years. The crisis, caused by Democrats’ cashless bail and other soft-on-crime policies, could be stopped today if they stopped pushing a radical, pro-criminal agenda. Today’s actions once again prove that Democrats care more about protecting violent felons and dangerous individuals than they do victims and law-abiding New Yorkers,” said Senator Tom O’Mara.

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“This legislation goes too far by sealing over 2-million criminal records in New York. It will make it impossible for schools, nursing homes and other businesses and organizations that serve vulnerable populations to obtain accurate background information on potential employees and volunteers. The bill is misguided and has the potential to threaten the safety of law-abiding citizens,” said Senator Patrick M. Gallivan.

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“With current Senate Democrat Leadership still reeling from their third attempt to address their disastrous bail reform failures, New Yorkers won’t be surprised to see that their approach to responsible reentry for incarcerated individuals is equally ham-fisted. Our state needs to do much better at providing opportunities for those who’ve paid their debt to society to reenter public life, but ignoring or erasing prior crimes like child abuse, animal abuse and a laundry list of other violent crimes will only continue One Party Rule’s assault on Public Safety and put more New Yorkers in danger,” said Senator Fred Akshar.

In 2019, Senate Democrats completely reversed years of public safety progress by turning the state criminal justice system on its head. For years, the passage of dangerous cashless bail laws, discovery law changes, parole “reforms,” and other pro-criminal policies has become commonplace in Albany.

The enactment of this soft-on-crime agenda coincides with a rise in violent crime and overall concerns about violent crime, including:

- A **44 percent rise in overall crime** in New York City in the first three months of 2022 compared to last year, including a **37 percent increase in major crimes** and **16 percent increase in shootings**;

- Compared to pre-pandemic, 2019 levels, March 2022 in New York City showed **vehicle thefts up 107 percent, shootings up 69 percent, grand larceny up 26 percent, felony assault up more than 22 percent and robberies up 37 percent;**
- **Subway assaults spiked more than 50 percent** between February and March this year, the **highest total in 11 months;** and
- A **Siena Poll released today** shows that New Yorkers' **top issue is crime**, and **an overwhelming majority of New Yorkers** believe that Democrats' recent window dressing **bail reform changes will either not reduce crime or increase it.**

Senate Republicans' sounding of the alarm today builds upon **continuous calls to Restore Public Safety** in New York. Their public protection plan, part of the **Take Back New York agenda** earlier this year, includes:

Protecting Those Who Protect Us:

- Invest in law enforcement;
- Provide them with the support they need to make our communities safe and serve those in need; and
- Fight Democrat efforts to demonize and "Defund the Police."

Rejecting Dangerous "Reforms" like Cashless Bail:

- End cashless bail, restore judicial discretion and reject dangerous Democrat proposals to erase criminal records;
- Require state agencies to be transparent about the effects of public safety policies; and
- Fix unworking discovery and "speedy trial" laws that have turned our justice system into a revolving door for repeat and violent offenders.

Reforming the Broken Parole System:

- Recenter the Parole process around the protection and rights of crime victims and their families;
- Ensure that cop-killers, serial killers, child killers, and other dangerous murderers can NEVER be released; and
- Reject dangerous Democrat proposals to weaken the Parole System.

Passing a Victims' Justice Agenda:

- Heighten penalties for violent and repeat offenders, as well as hate crimes;
- Invest in proven mental health, addiction, homeless, and victims' programs and services; and
- Strengthen and make Kendra's Law permanent, to ensure that those struggling with mental illness get the help they need.

Today's action comes just days after Senate Democrats passed a new State Budget that spends millions of taxpayer dollars to fund free college tuition for prison inmates. Their budget also failed to repeal New York's disastrous cashless bail law, and failed to empower judges with the ability to consider an individual's "dangerousness" in determining bail.

Albany Democrats' advancement of their pro-criminal legislation also comes during National Crime Victims' Rights Week, recognized since 1981 under the U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime. The week is dedicated to learn about victimization, and the effect it has on individuals, families, friends and the community, and to promote laws, policies, and programs to help victims of crime.

