



PATRICK M. GALLIVAN

May 12, 2014

Dear Constituent,

You and I both want children to be safe in school. Unfortunately, we are both familiar with the heartbreaking school shootings that have occurred in recent years. Additionally, bullying and drug use continue to be concerns in our schools that have the potential to lead to tragic results.

As a former Sheriff and State Trooper, I am keenly aware that unaddressed problems with youth during their teens often turns into serious law enforcement issues once students graduate. **I am excited to announce that this year's budget includes an important initiative that will help to keep our children, schools, and communities safer.**

For the first time, the New York State Budget includes an allocation to help school district's afford School Resource Officers (SRO). Now, I need your help to put SRO's in all the schools in the 59th Senatorial District that want them.

An SRO program places a trained law enforcement professional where they can best protect our state's children, in the school. SRO programs foster collaboration between law enforcement, school staff, students, and parents to provide safe learning environments and safe communities. In addition to providing the obvious benefit of deterring tragedies such as occurred in Columbine or Sandy Hook, SRO programs provide opportunities for students and faculty to interact with law enforcement in a positive way. Potential problems can be addressed before they get out of control through conflict resolution and anti-bullying programs.

However, SRO programs are not cheap. Typically they will require \$100,000 or more to fund. For many of the low-wealth, rural school districts I represent, this cost is prohibitive.

Last year, working with five school districts in Erie County and the Erie County Sheriff's Office, I developed and allocated funding for a first-of-its-kind shared SRO program. Sharing an SRO allows multiple schools, which would otherwise be unable to afford an SRO, to receive the benefit of this valuable resource at a reduced cost. Additionally, because the officer's presence at the different school districts is randomized and is not known in advance by the students, the effectiveness of the shared SRO is greater than sum of his time at any one district.

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The success of this model encouraged me to develop and propose a statewide program. Working with my Senate Colleagues, I was able to secure a funding allocation for shared SRO programs in the State budget. However, for a school district to receive funding for a shared SRO, it must request this funding in conjunction with the school districts with which it wishes to share this SRO.

If you agree, reach out to your School Board Members and your Superintendents and communicate to them your desire to have your school district participate in this program. There are limited funds for this program and the school districts that are quickest to propose a shared SRO program with their neighboring districts will have the best chance to access these funds. I am truly excited about this program and hope that every school I represent takes advantage of it.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office if you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter. Thank you for your time and attention to this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "PAT", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Patrick M. Gallivan
Senator, 59th District