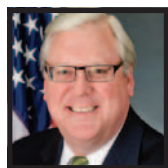


OPINION

TOM O'MARA | 58TH DISTRICT

What are they thinking?



Tom O'Mara

It can be frustrating to have to keep banging the proverbial drum of opposition when the right thing to do seems crystal clear. There's no choice in New York State government now.

Another week of the legislative session goes by yet, despite story after story after real life story from our streets and neighborhoods, Governor Andrew Cuomo and the extreme-liberal, downstate leaders of the Legislature take no action to fix what is so obviously a broken (and dangerous) bail reform law.

There are plenty of reactions to their inaction. Take your pick. I'll take former New York Police Department Commissioner Bill Bratton, who gets straight to the point, "What the hell were they thinking about in Albany when they crafted this mind-boggling set of limitations on the criminal justice system?"

What were they thinking, yes, but also, What are they thinking now? The law took effect on Jan. 1. There has been a daily drum-beat of opposition from law enforcement, district attorneys, judges, elected officials, and everyday citizens fearful of the consequences. Consequences,

by the way, that continue to mount and already include the deaths of innocent victims by repeat offenders set free under this irresponsible new law.

It bears repeating: It should be clear to any reasonable person that "No Bail" reform as it stands puts public safety at risk.

Unfortunately, there appears no place for reason in this Legislature under one-party, downstate Democrat control in a party where those pushing a Democrat Socialist, radically progressive agenda have dropped anchor and are firmly moored within the highest levels of New York decision making.

Make no mistake their agenda favors criminals over crime victims. It is an agenda disdainful of a commonsense tenet of public safety: some criminals belong behind bars. It is an agenda so clearly out of step with the legislative district I represent but that nevertheless forces us to face its consequences.

Governor Cuomo let another week go by without demanding change - another week that produced another string of victims. The Democrat majority leader of the Senate and the Democrat Speaker of the Assembly allowed their chambers to gavel out without taking action. Unbelievably, however, the Senate Democrat majority did find time to begin pushing their next criminal justice reform: automatic parole

hearings for every inmate who turns 55 while in prison, even those serving a sentence of life without parole for horrific, violent crimes inflicted on society.

The advocates of the new "No Bail" reform, for their part, stepped up an already aggressive campaign to push the position legislative leaders are clinging to: No changes needed.

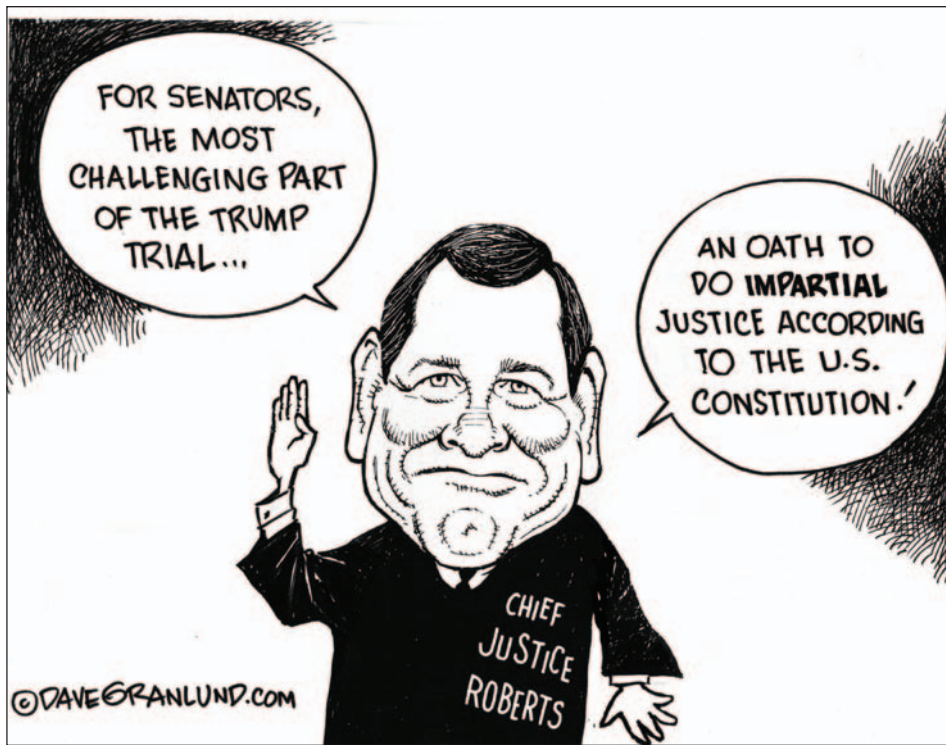
"No Bail" has become the poster for the pitfalls of one-party control of government where checks and balances are thrown out the window or, to put it another way, criminals walk out the door.

Remember that when the Legislature enacted bail reform, not a single Republican in the Senate or Assembly voted for it. Last week, many of us began offering constituents an online petition to join our fight for repealing the law.

We will keep delivering the message that this is bad public policy. It's dangerous and it will get worse. Our communities and the law enforcement community as a whole deserve better.

We will keep highlighting the danger and keep pushing for a commonsense, safer, more workable solution that achieves necessary reform but that protects public safety as priority number one.

To sign our petition, visit my Senate website: www.omara.nysenate.gov and click on the "Repeal Bail Reform" icon on the home page.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Problems between US and Iran

To the Editor,
Our mass media has been negligent in reviewing the history of the problems between the United States and Iran.

Considering our present conflict with Iran, nowhere have I seen or heard any indication of this history: neither in newspapers, TV nor radio.

After World War II, Iran showed a great admiration for the United States as a democratic republic and the constitutional principles for which it stood. They formulated a constitution similar to the one they saw governing the United States and they had a free and open election in which Mosaddeq was elected their first president.

His administration was similar in many ways to that of Franklin D. Roosevelt, somewhat left of center. In 1953, Dwight Eisenhower was our president. He worked with the CIA to bring about a coup to remove Mosaddeq from office.

This country saw fit to install a shah in his place. Mohammad Reza Pahlavi became the shah of Iran. His reign was one of terror during which many

people died or escaped to other countries and Iran was no longer a democratic republic.

That is the history that we seem to forget. What would be the reaction of the citizens of this country if another country saw fit to manipulate our government in this way?

Why does Iran have ill feelings towards the United State? When the history of our past is known, it is obvious.

Unfortunately the hands of our government are not always clean when it comes to our behavior towards other nations. If we do not learn from past history, we will probably repeat it.

Ruth S. Young, Horseheads

Praise for Gov. Cuomo

To the Editor,
Whose goal in NY State is fighting hate and helping the planet?

Would that other politicians would look at what's important to our future, the lives of all of us as well as our Planet Earth.

Then on the other hand, we have State Rep. Tom O'Mara who writes a humongous opinion which simply put goes on and on and on and on and on. He definitely exceeds the

limit of the word limit put on most of us while saying the same thing over and over and over.

Why not give the new laws on bail a chance? We also see many people incarcerated at a huge cost without giving them an opportunity to do better. We don't need to overcrowd our jails and prisons.

But, hey, I side with the "downstate legislators" who are willing to be more humane.

How about you Mr. O'Mara? How long will we wait until the GOP wakes up and realizes we are in climate crisis no matter the reason. How long will we wait until the GOP realizes we have a criminal in the White House who is trying to get us into a war.

How long do we have to wait until the biggest liar in the oval office is gone and we can help the people at the border who are looking for a new, safe way of life but who are being abused by supposed officials? Will we have to wait another four years for our democracy to be destroyed by bigotry, white nationalism, hubris and greed?

How long Mr. O'Mara?

Flo Fender, Pine Valley

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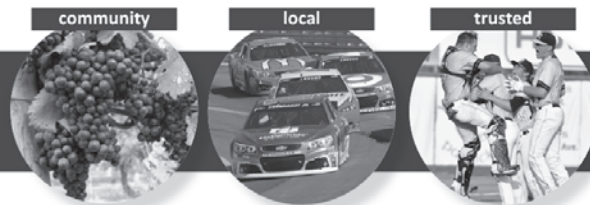
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