

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



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PUT VICTIMS FIRST: LAWMAKERS, LAW ENFORCEMENT & COMMUNITY LEADERS CALL FOR PASSAGE OF THE PROTECT ACT



Albany, New York – Senator Pam Helming was joined by Madison County Sheriff Todd Hood, Ontario County Sheriff Dave Cirencione, Monroe County Sheriff Todd Baxter, and law enforcement and community leaders from across New York to call for the immediate passage of the [S.2282A PROTECT Act](#). They warned that current laws are allowing dangerous individuals to be released back into communities.

Introduced by Senator Helming and developed with bipartisan input from law enforcement and faith leaders, the legislation would require courts to evaluate whether an individual charged with a felony or Class A misdemeanor poses a risk to public safety when making pretrial decisions.

The PROTECT Act establishes a clear “dangerousness” standard to help keep communities safe while ensuring that no one is held simply because they cannot afford bail. Supporters say this measure is a commonsense step to prevent repeat offenses and stop the next tragedy before it happens.

“We just marked Crime Victims’ Rights Week, but too often in New York we are seeing the same pattern: dangerous individuals released, only to commit another violent crime. These are not isolated incidents. They are preventable tragedies. The PROTECT Act is about stopping the next

tragedy before it happens by requiring courts to consider public safety when making pretrial release decisions. We have a responsibility to protect our communities, stand with victims, and support law enforcement. New Yorkers deserve better, and it is time to pass the PROTECT Act,” **said Senator Pam Helming.**

“We have seen firsthand the consequences of a system that does not fully account for dangerousness when making release decisions. When individuals with a history of violence or clear warning signs are released back into the community, it puts victims, families, and law enforcement at risk. The PROTECT Act brings balance back to the system by allowing judges to use a risk-based approach and prioritize public safety. It is a necessary change that will help prevent repeat offenses and give our communities greater confidence in the justice system,” **said Madison County Sheriff Todd Hood.**

“Public safety is not a political issue. Ask yourself: Why don’t New York residents receive the same protections as every other citizen in the nation? Without decisive intervention, repeat offenders will continue to put our communities at risk,” **said Monroe County Sheriff Todd K. Baxter.** “The PROTECT Act establishes a clear, consistent dangerousness standard, bringing New York in line with every other state and the federal system while strengthening protections for victims and safeguarding the rights of the accused.”

“Public safety has to be the top priority when courts are making pretrial decisions. Too often, law enforcement is put in the position of arresting the same individuals again and again because the system does not give judges the tools they need to properly assess risk. The PROTECT Act is about closing that gap. It mandates courts to consider whether someone poses a real threat to others, while still ensuring fairness in the process. This is a commonsense step that will help protect our communities and support the work our deputies do every day,” **said Ontario County Sheriff David Cirencione.**

The PROTECT Act (S.2282A) is currently in the Senate Codes Committee, where it awaits consideration. The Assembly companion bill (A.9684), sponsored by Assemblyman Michael Cashman, is also in the Assembly Codes Committee.

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