

News from Senator George M. Borrello

57th Senate District

Representing Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, and portions of Livingston County

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STATEMENT FROM SENATOR BORRELLO ON THE 2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

ALBANY – State Senator George Borrello released the following statement on the 2022 Legislative Session:

“The 2022 Legislative Session has ended, and along with it, the hopes of law-abiding, taxpaying New Yorkers that the Democratic leadership in the Legislature would finally put their interests first.

The most egregious failure of the session is the Legislature’s outright refusal to enact any meaningful changes to its disastrous bail ‘reform’ law. Skyrocketing crime rates are plaguing cities and communities across the state, and making New Yorkers fearful for the safety of themselves and their families. New York City, an economic driver for our state and international gateway, has been brought to its knees by soaring crime.

Even the rural communities that I represent are feeling the impact. Violent crimes and property crimes are up by double digits and local law enforcement is confronting the reality of more criminals on the streets, free to reoffend. Data confirm the crime increase is more than just anecdote: statewide between 2019 and 2020, murder increased by 46 percent, burglaries by 17 percent, and motor vehicle thefts by 54 percent. Figures also indicate that at least 20 percent of those arrested and released with an appearance ticket committed another crime before their court date.

Poll after poll has found that New Yorkers’ most urgent concern is crime and more than 80 percent wanted the law changed to give judges’ discretion in bail decisions. The response from Democratic leadership? They called it a ‘non-starter.’ They not only refused to make any changes to bail ‘reform,’ they doubled down on their pro-criminal approach by passing a so-called ‘Clean Slate’ measure that establishes a mechanism for sealing most criminal convictions, including violent crimes.

Against this self-created crime crisis, the Senate Majority’s insistence on pushing several new gun control initiatives as their sole anti-crime platform is hypocrisy at its worst. These bills are another infringement on the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens and will do nothing to prevent the kind of horrific mass murder we saw in Buffalo and Uvalde.

After Democrats have filled our neighborhoods and communities with repeat offenders and dangerous suspects who shouldn’t be on the streets, their anti-gun ‘public safety’ efforts ring hollow. The most impactful thing they could do to increase public safety would be to repeal their flawed bail ‘reform’ law, the worst mistake in the history of state governance.

The other key strategy to combatting random, mass violence would be to focus on strengthening mental health interventions. For those with mental illness, or showing symptoms of it, we need to increase the availability of mental health treatment options, by increasing support for inpatient and outpatient treatment as I’ve proposed in measures I sponsor with Senator Savino (S.8508) and Senator Palumbo (S.8856) and by funding more juvenile and adult mental health beds.

The other glaring missed opportunity of this session was the lack of any comprehensive effort to target the chronic and debilitating outflow of people and employers from our state. We recently learned that New York State lost even more population than we realized with the news that the Census Bureau overcounted our population by nearly 700,000. A report from the IRS revealed that our exodus of state residents totaled an economic loss of more than \$19.5 billion – the worst net loss of income of any state.

State leaders that truly care about the future of New York should be alarmed by these figures and motivated to action. However, there is no such urgency in Albany, except from my Republican colleagues. Instead, we have state leaders that prefer to ignore the problem while they spend irresponsibly and unsustainably and focus on special interest agenda items such as ‘social equity funds’ to help persons with criminal convictions start marijuana businesses and programs to pay for abortions for residents from other states.”

Rather than try to reverse New York’s relentless losses, One Party Rule keeps plowing ahead in the wrong direction. Exhibit A is the misguided Climate Act and its destructively aggressive mandates which will push our already-skyrocketing energy costs into the stratosphere. The initial blueprint, which calls for banning new gas service to homes and buildings by 2024, banning the sale of natural gas appliances by 2030 and banning gasoline-powered automobiles by 2035, will only hasten the exit from New York by both residents and businesses.”

While our advocacy led to some positive achievements, including legislative wins that will finally remove the major obstacles to expanding broadband access in rural areas, the acceleration of the middle-class tax cuts and important tax credits for agriculture, the actions that would need to be taken to change our current trajectory were nowhere to be found.

I remain hopeful that when my Democratic colleagues return to their home districts and hear concerns directly from their constituents about rising crime, energy costs, inflation and taxes, they may return to Albany in January, ready to work with us on some of these fundamental problems. In the meantime, my advocacy for the hardworking, law-abiding people in our region will continue.”

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