



NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

August 11, 2022

Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Temporary President & Majority Leader
New York State Senate
The Capitol, Room 332
Albany, New York 12247

Hon. Carl E. Heastie
Speaker, NYS Assembly
LOB932/CAP 349
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Governor Hochul, Majority Leader Cousins, and Speaker Heastie:

We write regarding Chapter 483 of the Laws of 2021 which established a task force to study cyber-bullying. This was signed into law on October 20, 2021 and per the legislation, members of the task force were to be appointed no later than 90 days after the effective date. However, January 20, 2022 came and went without you, as the specified appointing authorities, appointing members of this task force.

The task force was created to provide a study identifying the most common victims, most frequently used mediums, and the social and psychological effects of cyber-bullying in addition to measures to combat cyber-bullying including the actions taken by other states. Such a study was to culminate in recommendations produced by July 1, 2023. To give the task force members the time needed to begin their critical work, conduct a thorough investigation and generate effective recommendations to combat cyber-bullying, it is imperative that you make your respective appointments as soon as possible.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), nearly a third of middle and high schools report incidents of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is known to be negatively associated with the socio-emotional health of young people and can be a risk factor for youth violence. Better understanding cyber-bullying is the first step in mitigating its pernicious effects.

At a time when young people continue to deal with the mental health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we must do all we can to protect our children. This begins with learning and studying this issue and for these reasons, we request you appoint your members to this task force so they may begin their critical work.

Sincerely,



Senator Peter Oberacker
Ranker, Senate Standing Committee on Internet and Technology



Senator George M. Borrello
Member, Senate Standing Committee on Internet and Technology



Senator Anthony H. Palumbo
Ranker, Senate Standing Committee on Codes