



NEWS FROM
Senator Chris Jacobs
REPRESENTING THE 60TH NEW YORK SENATE DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**JACOBS ANNOUNCES PASSAGE OF LAW TO
PROTECT SCHOOL CHILDREN FROM PREDATORS, ABUSE**

Bill criminalizes sexual activity regardless of age of consent

(Albany, NY) —New York State Senator Chris Jacobs has announced passage of a law he co-sponsored that will provide greater protections for children by making it a criminal offense for a teacher or school employee to have a sexual relationship with a student under the age of 21.

“Children need to be protected from teachers and others in positions of power in our schools who may manipulate them into engaging in sexual activities, even if they are at the age of consent,” said Jacobs. The legislation also defines school employee to mean any person defined as an employee or volunteer for that school, “basically any adult at the school with direct student contact, in a position of trust,” said Jacobs.

In current law, teacher/student sexual relationships are not illegal if the student is over 17. Many instances have occurred around the state where teachers cultivate a relationship with a student and then turn it into a sexual one as soon as the student turns 17 years old. Earlier this year, a report revealing issues of sexual abuse at the Nichols School in Buffalo highlighted such a relationship between a 17-year-old student and a 48-year-old teacher that was not illegal under current state law because the relationship was consensual.

“No matter their age, we need to protect our children while in school,” Jacobs added. “By criminalizing these relationships and defining school employee to include teachers, non-education related service employees and volunteers, we are taking major strides to ensure the safety of our children in an environment where parents have every right to expect they will be protected,” said Jacobs.

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