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Legislator Monica R. Martinez Supports “Raise the Age” for the NYS Juvenile Justice System

On March 13, 2015 Legislator Martinez joined community organizations and elected officials for a press conference at the H.L. Dennison Building in Hauppauge.

Legislator Martinez was joined by County Executive Steve Bellone, her colleagues at the Legislature Kate Browning and Al Krupski, Sheriff De Marco, Judge Camacho, Assemblyman Phil Ramos and Assemblywoman Michaelle Solages, Deputy Police Commissioner Mention-Lewis and members of community organizations in support of Governor Cuomo’s “Raise the Age” proposal.

“As member of the Public Safety Committee and an educator for 14 years, I cannot emphasize how important reforming New York’s juvenile justice system is. New York and Suffolk County in particular are known for leading the nation on important issues but we have fallen short on this one,” stated Legislator Martinez.

Studies have found that young people prosecuted in the adult criminal justice system are 34% more likely to be re-arrested for felony crimes than youths retained in the youth justice system. Research into brain development also determined adolescents are in fact children and that the human brain is not fully developed until the age of 25. As the cognitive skills develop, behavior in adolescents may often times be impulsive and lack the ability to focus on the consequence of their behavior.

“We need to assure our young men and women are afforded an opportunity to get ‘back on track’ in a system which offers them help and support and not in a system where they are more likely to reoffend and least likely to lead a productive life in society,” concluded Legislator Martinez.

