



SURVIVORS NETWORK OF THOSE ABUSED BY PRIESTS
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May 1, 2026

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

A4362-B Rosenthal / S9778-A Sepulveda

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to the duty owed to children in the legal custody of agencies

As the world's oldest and largest community of survivors of clergy and institutional sexual abuse, SNAP can attest to the horrific and lasting effects of such harm wrought on children, no matter the institution responsible for it.

When a state takes custody of a child, they assume the role of sole protector, just as a parent is responsible for the health and wellbeing of their own children. The state's duty to the child is paramount, and this legislation clarifies that custodial entities are legally responsible for protecting the child from all foreseeable dangers, including neglect and abuse.

Moreover, this bill confirms the ruling of the New York State Court of Appeals, which clarified that Child Victim Act plaintiffs need not prove "special duty" to pursue negligence claims. Further, this bill seeks to avoid disproportionate harm to Black, Latino and other children of color, which have recently come to light in the disposition of cases being dismissed on procedural grounds. Instead, this bill strives to ensure consistency in the Act's application, aiming for fair and even treatment for all survivors.

Finally, this duty to protect children supersedes any attempts by public entities to avoid accountability through technicalities or shirking their responsibilities by contracting out foster

care services. In fact, this bill clarifies the shared responsibility between agencies and closes gaps that allow public entities to evade their duty of care.

Our commitment to protecting the vulnerable, healing the wounded, preventing abuse and fighting for justice for all survivors aligns with the aims of this legislation. This bill would strengthen legal clarity, promote equity across all vulnerable children, and ensure that survivors have true access to justice.

For these reasons SNAP Survivors Network supports this legislation.

[SNAP Survivors Network](#) is the world's oldest and largest community of survivors of clergy and institutional sexual abuse. Through public action and peer support, SNAP is building a future where no institution is beyond justice and no survivor stands alone. Our global community works to end sexual abuse in faith-based organizations by transforming laws, institutions, and lives.