**[LETTER FROM NY RESIDENT]**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:

As a resident of New York State, I strongly support the New York Child Victims Act (A01771).

I urge you to vote in favor of the Child Victims Act.

Please consider these statistics: An average of one in five children is sexually abused in the US - one in four girls and one in six boys. In 2012, 4.2 million children under eighteen made up 22% of NY’s total population – one in five is 840,000 NY children. An average of 840,000 children were victims of sexual abuse in New York alone. This is a serious problem and I ask you to please help victims of childhood sexual abuse by supporting A01771.

Currently, New York has one of the most restrictive statutes of limitations for reporting of childhood sexual abuse. We must change this embarrassing fact. We as New Yorkers protect our children. Our laws do the same. Our laws should *consistently* do the same. We need to change this statute of limitations to make this area of law consistent with our broad protection of children. The current statute of limitations does NOT protect children - it protects the pedophiles who abuse them. We must change this. We must protect our children. We must assure justice for victims of crime. We can do no less.

It is accepted medical knowledge that it can take years, even decades, before victims find the strength to come forward about being abused, to realize how they have been harmed by the abuse, and even to recognize their childhood experience as abuse. When victims are finally able to disclose the abuse they suffered, they often find that the NY civil statute of limitations has already expired. This is a terrible injustice and a further psychological blow to innocent victims of one of the most heinous crimes imaginable, a crime so repulsive that even hardened criminals in prison hate it – the crime of using vulnerable children for sexual gratification. The crime of child molestation. The current statute of limitations in New York allows abusers to avoid accountability for their actions. This is unconscionable to me as a New York citizen.

It is also critically important to extend the statute of limitations with A01771 in order to protect children today. When victims of past abuse identify and expose perpetrators, often more recent victims come forward who are within the criminal statute of limitations once they realize that they are not alone and they will receive justice for the harm done to them. Removing New York’s statute of limitations on prosecution of child sex crimes will deter abusers from acting on their aberrant inclinations. Now, abusers know that they can “get away with it” after only a few years have passed and this encourages them to continue to abuse children, sometimes many generations of children over the course of 30, 40, even 60 years.

By adopting A01771, New York will send a strong message to child molesters: you WILL be prosecuted for attacking our children.

The Child Victims Act will eliminate the civil statute of limitations for child sex abuse law suits, and allow victims a chance to be made whole again in the law, to recover damages from their abuser and the institution that failed to prevent their abuse. **Justice should serve the victim of crime, not the perpetrator.** Please support the Child Victims Act A01771.

Sincerely,

[Name, address, and contact phone/email]