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### D'Alessandro fights for tougher penalties



# Joan's Law gets another push

Nancy Cutler Rockland/Westchester Journal News USA TODAY NETWORK

STONY POINT – Rosemarie D'Alessandro on Tuesday visited the site where the body of her 7-year-old daughter, Joan, was found in 1973. Once again, Joan's mother went to the edge of Harriman State Park to advocate for criminal justice reforms to protect children.

This time, though, it was in memory of another murder victim, and in support of another mother whose child was brutally taken away.

D'Alessandro wants New York to extend Joan's Law, a bill she helped form in 2004. But, she wants the new version called "Paula's Law."

#### LaBarbera found drunk

■ Report: Just 2½ weeks out of prison, Bohovesky killer violated parole. 2A

That's because she hopes New York will extend the ban on parole for someone who murders a child under age 14 during a sexual attack set forth in Joan's Law. She wants the new law to apply to anyone who kills a child under 18. And she wants it named in memory of Paula Bohovesky, a talented 16-year-old girl who was bludgeoned to death in a Pearl River alley by two men in 1980.

The idea came to Rosemarie D'Alessandro

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Rosemarie D'Alessandro places flowers by a photo of her daughter, Joan, in Harriman State Park on Tuesday at the site where Joan's body was found in 1973. D'Alessandro wants New York to extend Joan's Law, a bill she helped form in 2004. But she wants the new version called "Paula's Law." PETER CARR/THE JOURNAL NEWS

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## Joan Angela D'Alessandro



A poster of Joan D'Alessandro was displayed during Tuesday's press event.

## **D'Alessandro**

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after hearing last month that one of Paula Bohovesky's killers had been granted parole. D'Alessandro first raised the idea in an interview with The Journal News/lohud.com in which she spoke of her empathy and concern for Paula's mother, Lois Bohovesky.

State Sen. David Carlucci, D-New City, contacted D'Alessandro after a reporter reached out to him for comment on her idea. On July 17, he introduced Paula's Law, which would extend Joan's Law just as D'Alessandro envisioned. In New Jersey, Joan's Law was updated in 2017 to address victims under 18. There is a federal version of Joan's Law as well, which applies to crimes against children under 14.

Repeated parole hearings — in New York, a prisoner can be up for parole every two years — traumatizes families. D'Alessandro said.

"She really doesn't get a break," D'Alessandro said of Lois Bohovesky. "It's not human ... the testifying is horrible. Just horrible."

Lois Bohovesky was not at Tuesday's press conference, but Carlucci said she is aware of the legislation.

Carlucci stood at a podium set up along Gate Hill Road near Harriman State Park with a full Rockland legislative contingent: Sen. James Skoufis, D-Woodbury, Assemblyman Ken Zebrowski, D-New City, and Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee, D-Suffern. Skoufis has Skoufis reminded the small gathering that one of Paula Bohovesky's killers, Richard LaBarbera, was released from prison July 8 and less than three weeks later was back in jail for violating parole in the Buffalo area.

According to the Buffalo News, LaBarbera parole officers allegedly found him drunk during a check, a violation of his parole. LaBarbera had been drinking in a bar with co-killer Robert McCain the night they killed Paula. McCain's parole bid was rejected last month.

"Joan and Paula, they had a future, they deserved a future," Zebrowski said. "Parole dishonors the memo-

ry of these two young individuals."

The laws wouldn't apply to either Joan D'Alessandro's or Paula Bohovesky's killers, since their crimes predate the legislative changes. "But it can help others," Rosemarie D'Alessandro said.

After the short speeches, Rosemarie D'Alessandro, accompanied by two of her sons, placed a bouquet of blue flowers, tied with a blue ribbon, near the sign that stands in memory of Joan. In the grove of trees below, green ribbons had been tied around several trunks. Blue was Paula's favorite color; green was Joan's.

Affixed under the sign in Joan's memory is a small plaque with a butterfly. Rosemarie D'Alessandro noted that every time she visits the site where her daughter's body was found on Easter Sunday, she sees a white

butterfly.

On Tuesday, she saw two.

Steve Lieberman contributed.



Ernest VanDenHeuvel, a member of joansjoy.org, visits the site where Joan D'Alessandro's body was found in 1973. PHOTOS BY PETER CARR/THE JOURNAL NEWS



Rosemarie D'Alessandro attends a press conference on Tuesday in Harriman State Park.