

# State Rep. Greg Lavelle Asks for Unified Effort to Decrease Teacher Sex Crimes

– *Legislator Asks to Meet with A.G. Biden to Discuss Strategies* –

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Citing a continuing series of sex crimes committed by Delaware educators, State Rep. Greg Lavelle (R-Sharples) is calling for a bipartisan effort to curtail such crimes and punish perpetrators.

In the latest incident, a 38-year-old Sussex Tech teacher was arrested this week on charges he had a sexual relationship with a 17-year-old female student.

“There have been more than a dozen Delaware teachers charged in connection with alleged instances of sexual misconduct over the last five years,” Rep. Lavelle said. “As both a parent and a public servant, I find this disturbing on many levels.”

Rep. Lavelle said he is requesting a meeting with State Attorney General Beau Biden to ask for his input on crafting a strategy to reduce crimes of this type. “A.G. Biden is known for his efforts to protect children from sexual crimes and I’d welcome his insights on this issue.”

Lavelle, who is also House Minority Leader, said he has no trouble reaching across the aisle to find a solution to this problem. “There is nothing partisan about this. In my experience, members of both parties are of one mind when it comes to crimes against children.”

In addition to reaching out to the attorney general, Rep. Lavelle said he’d also like to partner with his General Assembly colleagues from both parties to move forward quickly on this. “I also intend to invite the Delaware State Education Association into this discussion,” he said. “When a teacher commits a sex crime against student it not only breaks a public trust, it erodes the collective reputations of all educators. The DSEA has a doubly-vested interest in this issue, not only to protect the children in their members’ charge, but to also safeguard the integrity of their profession.”

Rep. Lavelle said that while increasing penalties is one potential outcome of the process, he is open to other possibilities.

“I do think we need to look at more severe punishment, but that only deals with cases after a crime has occurred and the tragedy has unfolded,” Rep. Lavelle said. “I think there may be other things we can do to prevent these crimes from occurring in the first place. That’s one of the reasons I am encouraging full participation in this process.”

Rep. Lavelle said it is his hope that after meeting with the attorney general, and discussing the matter with his colleagues, legislation can be sent to the governor prior to the end of the current session on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

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