

Department of Motor Vehicles
Fiscal Year 2020-21 Budget Hearing
January 28, 2020

Testimony of Mark JF Schroeder, Commissioner

Good Morning. Thank you, Chairperson Krueger, Chairperson Weinstein, Chairperson Kennedy, Chairperson Magnarelli, and other members of the Legislature for inviting me here today. I am Mark Schroeder, Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles and Chair of the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee.

Governor Cuomo's executive budget plan provides \$428 million for DMV to support its main office in Albany, 27 State operated offices, and 102 County operated offices, and will enable us to continue our efforts to improve overall customer service, promote traffic safety, and protect consumers.

DMV will use these funds to accommodate more in-office customer visits as the result of the increasing driver license renewal volumes, increased federal mandates when testing for Commercial Drivers Licenses, implementation of the Green Light Law, and additional in-office transactions resulting from

our implementation of the Federal Real ID Act. These factors have resulted in short-term customer service challenges that we are addressing through the addition of staff, additional equipment, additional use of reservations, increasing office hours, including Saturdays and the expansion of our service network, among other changes. The additional funding will allow us to reduce current wait times and, hopefully, achieve our goal of serving all customers within 30 minutes, which was established by Governor Cuomo in 2013.

The New York State Department of Motor Vehicles collects more than \$2.1 Billion in revenue each year through its State and County run issuing offices, Traffic Violation Bureaus, Safety Hearings, and other related activities. The revenue collected, not only indirectly funds the department, but also assists in funding state road and bridge repair, as well as, other state and local government agencies.

On December 16, 2019, DMV implemented the Green Light Law that was passed by the legislature and signed into Law in June 2019. This law allows residents of New York State to obtain a driver's license without providing proof of legal presence in the

United States. We believe this will result in safer roads as drivers must pass the eye, written, and road tests administered by the Department, and be required to provide proof of insurance for any registered vehicles. Since implementing this change, we have issued approximately three times the number Class D permits compared to the same period one year ago.

DMV started issuing a standalone Real ID compliant document on October 30, 2017. Currently over 3.4 Million New Yorkers hold Real ID compliant documents.

DMV continues to redesign and re-engineer the website and mobile user experience making it easier for customers to obtain information and complete transactions. Our website received more than 43 million visits over the past year and currently offers more than 68 online transactions and services. In 2019, customers performed more than 7.7 million internet transactions totaling nearly \$613 million. Reflecting a continuing trend to electronic communications, approximately 25% of registrations are enrolled in our electronic registration renewal and inspection reminders program, saving the state more than \$1 million in postage annually. In addition, DMV has developed an interactive

online Document Guide to help customers determine what documents they need when applying for a new driver license, permit, or non-driver ID card. This is also helpful for customers wanting to change their current document to an Enhanced or REAL ID. Since the Document Guide was released, more than 2.7 million customers have used it to prepare for their visit to the DMV. In 2019, DMV also expanded this new online guide service to customers looking to register a vehicle.

These initiatives are just some of many underway that will modernize and streamline the way DMV services its customers. As part of this modernization effort, DMV is replacing its outdated computer system; upgrading all workstations, testing stations, and credit card devices in its field offices; increasing network capacity and scanning capabilities; and improving its website accessibility- all in an effort to improve performance and reliability for our customers.

Partnering with several state agencies through the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee, DMV will continue its outstanding work that has made New York's roadways among the safest in the nation.

GTSC distributes more than \$30 million in federal funding

annually to support traffic safety initiatives including enforcement efforts by state and local law enforcement agencies to combat impaired driving and distracted driving as well as other dangerous driving behaviors.

The goals of the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee are to prevent motor vehicle crashes, save lives and reduce the severity of injuries suffered in crashes occurring on the state's roadways. GTSC provides leadership and support for the attainment of these goals through its administration of the federal highway safety grant funding awarded to New York by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. New York State continues to lead the way in adopting legislation and promoting education for all New Yorkers that will make the roads safer. As a result of these efforts and many others, fatality rates continue to drop. Preliminary statistics show a continued decrease in fatalities from 2018 to 2019. Fatalities in NYS have dropped over 18 percent in the past decade.

Looking forward, DMV will continue its commitment to improve traffic safety, protect consumers, innovate and improve our procedures, maintain a high level of customer service, and provide convenient options for our customers to complete

transactions. We remain strongly committed to our core mission to serve the citizens of New York.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today. I welcome any questions you might have about DMV and our plans for serving the people of New York.

Agency Mission:

DMV issues secure identity documents, delivers essential motor vehicle and driver related services, and administers motor vehicle laws enacted to promote safety and protect consumers.

Agency Vision:

To be a national leader in providing efficient, innovative, and responsive government services.