



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

Larkin Announces New Law To Increase Penalties For Speeding In Highway & Bridge Work Zones

[WILLIAM J. LARKIN JR.](#) August 1, 2005

Senator Bill Larkin (R-C, Cornwall-on-Hudson) today announced the enacting of a new law that will promote safety in New York's highway and bridge work zones and increase penalties for those convicted of speeding within them.

"The driving public must fully understand just how dangerous a job it is for our highway and bridge workers," said Senator Larkin. "When reckless motorists speed through work zones, that danger increases ten-fold. This new law is designed to be tough on those who would put road workers at a higher risk and cause needless accidents."

The Work Zone Safety Act of 2005 comes on the heels of one of the worst work zone accidents in New York State history. On May 20, 2005, highway workers Jonathon Randall, 32, and Wayne Bonsell, 39, both of Binghamton, and Jason Pessoni, 30, of Cincinnatus, were killed in a work zone on Interstate 81 in the Town of Chenango when a speeding charter bus struck a tractor trailer and started a chain reaction leading to the deaths of the three men.

Key provisions of the new law will:

* Increase police presence in work zones to enforce posted speed reductions.

- * Increase radar speed display signs in work zones as visible reminders of motorist speed.
- * Impose a 60-day suspension of driver's licenses when a person is convicted of two or more work zone speeding violations, in addition to the double minimum fine for speeding in work zones that exists under current law.
- * Impose an additional \$50 surcharge for speeding in work zones, with the proceeds devoted to a newly established Highway Construction and Maintenance Safety Education Fund.

A new highway advisory radio broadcast is in development to provide real-time construction information. The website, www.travelinfony.com, will enable New Yorkers to pinpoint the location of work zones they may encounter before they travel.

Motorists should also be aware of Operation Hard Hat, a program in which

State troopers inconspicuously placed within work zones record speeds of vehicles and radio descriptions of violators to teammates in marked chase cars. During the 2004 Operation Hard Hat campaign, State Police issued 1,648 tickets statewide for speeding in and around work zones.

A total of 467 traffic crashes were reported in New York State Department of Transportation work zones in 2004, with seven crashes resulting in fatalities. Since 1995, there have been 485 intrusions in work zones. Intrusions occur when vehicles enter the closed portion of a marked work zone.