



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Owen H. Johnson

## Senate Majority's Disastrous Budget Continues to Pile on More Taxes and Fees

OWEN H. JOHNSON August 26, 2009

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### *Drivers Licenses & Registrations to Increase 25% on September 1<sup>st</sup>*

Every New Yorker that drives a car, a truck, a motorcycle, an ATV, or a boat will be paying more as the latest round of massive tax and fee hikes approved by the new Senate Majority in Albany takes effect next month. This time their target is motor vehicle fees, most of which will go up 25 percent for virtually every type of vehicle New Yorkers use every day.

If you drive a car you will pay more to get or renew your license and register the vehicle. If you own a boat, an ATV or other vehicle, it will cost you more not only to register them, but to transport them as well, as fees on trailers will go up.

“The motor vehicle fee hikes will hit Long Island the hardest because cars are not a luxury, they are an everyday necessity,” Senator Owen H. Johnson said. “People depend on their cars and trucks to get to work, go to school, shop and get around their communities. The new Senate Majority who approved these tax increases either don’t understand that or just don’t care. I do, which is why I voted against every one of these tax and fee increases. New Yorkers clearly have had enough.”

Senator Owen H. Johnson voted against the state budget and proposed an alternative plan that would have avoided the tax and fees increases. He also proposed amendments to the budget to eliminate the tax and fee hikes and restore the STAR property tax rebate checks that were eliminated in the budget. The budget amendments were opposed by Majority.

These new motor vehicle increases will cost the average Long Island family more than \$180. In addition, drivers have to pay higher Thruway tolls as well as increased tolls in the downstate MTA region. Overall, the tax and fee hikes in the budget will cost the average New York family \$2,400 more per year.

“Every month brings a new round of tax and fee hikes that the Senate and Assembly Majorities forced on New Yorkers in the state budget,” Senator Johnson said. “This month it’s motor vehicle fees, next it will be hunting and fishing licenses, earlier this year it was higher taxes for wine and beer, internet purchases and car insurance. And the biggest hit will come this fall when homeowners don’t get their STAR rebate checks to help pay their property taxes because the new Senate Majority took them away.”

Registration fees are scheduled to increase September 1, 2009 for passenger vehicles, commercial vehicles, trailers, taxis, busses, motorcycles, all terrain vehicles, construction vehicles, motorboats and

custom vehicles. Drivers licenses and registration fees will go up by 25 percent, creating an additional cost to New York drivers projected to be almost \$152 million over the next two years. The cost of a drivers license will also increase 25 percent starting September 1<sup>st</sup>.

The motor vehicle fee increases were included in the more than \$8.5 billion in tax and fee hikes approved by Governor Paterson and Democrats in the Senate and Assembly as part of the 2009-10 state budget that is already \$2.1 billion out of balance.

“The Governor is already talking about more possible tax hikes to close a \$2.1 billion deficit caused by his irresponsible \$13 billion budget spending increase,” Senator Owen H. Johnson said. “I did not support the tax and fee increases in the budget and I will not support more tax hikes to close the budget gap. We have to reduce taxes and get state spending under control.”

On September 1, 2009, the following motor vehicle registration fees will be increased:

- Passenger vehicle registration fees increase from \$44 to \$55 (two year average depending on vehicle);
- Commercial vehicle registration fees increase from \$1.21 (per 500 lbs of vehicle weight) up to \$1.51 at the low end of the range and increase from \$11.50 to \$14.38 (per 500 lbs) at the high end;
- Trailer registration fees will increase from an average of \$34 to \$42.50;
- Taxi registration fees, on average, will increase from \$48 to \$60;
- Average bus registration fees will increase from \$73 to \$91.25;
- Motorcycle registration increases from \$14 to \$17.50;
- All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) registration increases from \$10 to \$12.50; and
- Average motorboat registrations will rise from \$40 to \$50.

In addition, fees will be increased to re-register vehicles, register custom vehicles and make photocopies of motor vehicle documents.

Also, starting on April 1, 2010, New Yorkers obtaining or renewing their vehicle registration will be required to purchase brand new license plates, whether they need them or not, for \$25 -- a \$10 increase.

“The Senate Majority’s tax hikes are costing New Yorkers more and more every month and when they are all in place, they will increase the annual taxes paid by an average family of four by \$2,400 a year,”

Senator Johnson said. “We have to control spending and reduce taxes if we are going to help struggling families make ends meet and help businesses retain and create jobs. Every tax hike makes New York less competitive and puts us further behind other states when the recovery begins.”