



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

## Senator Flanagan Warns Long Islanders About New Motor Vehicle Costs

JOHN J. FLANAGAN September 3, 2009

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Senator John Flanagan (2<sup>nd</sup> Senate District) is warning every New Yorker who drives a car, a truck, a motorcycle, an ATV, or a boat about new fees at the New York State Department of Motor Vehicle (NYSDMV) that went into effect on September 1. These new costs, which were approved by the Democratically-controlled Senate and Assembly earlier this year, will increase motor vehicle fees by up to 25 percent for virtually every type of vehicle New Yorkers use every day.

According to information from the state, every car owner will pay more to get or renew their driver's license and for their automobile's registration. Those who own boats, ATVs or other vehicles will not only pay more to register their vehicle but also to transport it as well since fees on trailers will also go up.

"These increased fees will add to the burden faced by our residents and it is time for the state to find a new way to pay its bills," stated Senator Flanagan. "People across Long Island have been asked to pay more for the trains, more for their homes and now more for their cars. Some in New York need to realize that Long Island families need their cars to get around and it is absurd that they are being asked to pay for what is a basic necessity. This is another step in pushing people off Long Island and out of this state and it needs to change."

As of September 1, the new prices for registration fees across New York State are as follows:

- 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;
- Motorcycle registration increases from \$14 to \$17.50;
- All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) registration increase 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 cost of obtaining and renewing a driver's license also has increased and will now cost driver's up to 25 percent more. In addition, Long Island residents will also be responsible for paying an additional \$24 over the life of their license due to a downstate MTA region surcharge.

In total, these new motor vehicle increases will cost the average Long Island family with two vehicles more than \$180. And, due to the MTA bailout, drivers in the region also have to pay higher tolls on the bridges and tunnels.

Combined with the other taxes and fees that were included in the more than \$8.5 billion in tax and fee hikes approved by Governor Paterson and Democratically-controlled Senate and Assembly as part of the 2009-10 state budget, these changes will cost every average family in New York over \$2,400.

And all of these new costs will be in addition to the cost of the new MTA Payroll Tax that will affect every Long Islander and the removal of billions in property tax relief that was lost due to the elimination of the New York STAR Middle Class Property Tax rebate program.

But, even with all these changes and the federal stimulus monies, the budget that the Democratically-controlled legislature approved is already \$2.1 billion out of balance.

Senator Flanagan voted against the state budget that contained the new motor vehicle fees during the budget process in an effort to protect residents from the added burden. He also proposed an alternative budget that would have controlled statewide costs by restricting state spending and sponsored amendments that would have restored the STAR property tax rebate check while eliminating the taxes and fees that were used to balance the state's budget.

All these ideas were rejected by the Senate Democrats during budget negotiations.

"Every month, more of the damage that was inflicted on New York residents due to the state budget becomes clear and for some people it is forcing them to decide whether they can afford to stay in the home they grew up in. Now, while New York begins to deal with a \$2.1 billion hole it needs to fill, it is critical that everyone realize that our residents pay too much and it is time to look elsewhere," added Senator Flanagan. "Any upcoming discussions regarding the budget deficit should involve drastic changes to the operation of state government including spending cuts, cost controls and a general reduction in the size of our government."