



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Owen H. Johnson

## Senator Owen Johnson Fights to Protect Children From Drunk Drivers

OWEN H. JOHNSON November 19, 2009

| ISSUE: **DRUNK DRIVING**

The Senate passed bipartisan landmark legislation drastically increasing the penalty for any person who drives intoxicated with a child passenger. Two recent fatal incidents involving intoxicated drivers with child passengers have highlighted the need for stronger measures to prevent or punish persons who drive intoxicated with children as passengers.

This measure provides for the harshest penalties and most significant expansion of preventative measures to date for any offender convicted of driving while intoxicated with a child passenger.

All offenders will be required to install an ignition interlock device in their vehicle upon conviction of any DWI offense, which may be waived only upon a judicial finding that the offender has no history of alcohol abuse or dependence.

Senator Johnson said, "driving drunk is dangerous, irresponsible and criminal. Allowing a child to be a passenger in a car when driving drunk is unconscionable and should be a felony, and that is precisely what this bill does. In addition, this law would help prevent future drunk driving crashes by requiring all convicted drunk drivers to use ignition interlocks. I'm pleased that we were able to work in a bipartisan manner and pass this important

legislation, which will further strengthen New York's DWI laws and prevent drunk driving crashes on our roadways.”