



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

Legislation to Protect Cyclists Advances In The State Senate

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS April 27, 2010

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On Tuesday, April 27th, Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins announced the Senate Transportation Committee passed legislation (S6620) that will establish protections for cyclists. In January, Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins introduced the bill requiring a three-foot buffer zone between a motor vehicle passing a cyclist proceeding in the same direction on a highway.

The bill is also known as "Merrill's Law", in memory of Merrill Cassell, an avid cyclist and safety advocate, who was fatally struck by a vehicle while cycling in Greenburgh, in Westchester County.

Senator Stewart-Cousins said that the creation of a three-foot buffer zone contained in the provisions of this bill will make the use of bicycle lanes safer by providing more space between the passenger side of a moving vehicle and the bicyclist. Violations of this buffer zone will result in similar penalties to that of a reckless driving charge.

"I applaud my colleagues on the Senate Transportation Committee for the decision to support of this important safety measure," said Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins. Senate bill 6620 is now awaiting consideration in the Senate Codes Committee. Once approved in Codes, the bill will advance to the floor for a full Senate vote.

"Cycling should be safe for everyone," said Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins. "I am pleased to announce that this legislation has taken significant step towards passing in the New York State Senate and becoming law. This bill is a common sense solution that will lower the number of accidents that claim far too many lives and cause far too many injuries each year. As such, I intend to strongly advocate for its passage."