



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

## Senator Fuschillo: Statistics Show Leandra's Law Is Working

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. July 12, 2010

| ISSUE: **DRUNK DRIVING**

### ***248 Drunk Drivers Already Charged Under the New Law***

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) today applauded the announcement that, since its enactment last December, Leandra's Law has already resulted in the arrest of 248 individuals who endangered the lives of children by putting them in a car and then driving drunk.

The figures, which were released by the New York State Department of Criminal Justice Services and detailed in an article in today's *New York Daily News*, also showed that 48 of those drunk drivers were arrested on Long Island. That number is nearly 20 percent of the statewide total.

"These numbers just reinforce why Leandra's Law was needed. Far too many people endanger the lives of children by putting them in a car and driving drunk. Law enforcement officers are clearly using this tool to protect us, and this should serve as a reminder that those who play games with children's lives will face felony charges," said Senator Fuschillo, who authored the law along with Senator Martin Dilan (D-Brooklyn) and Assemblyman Harvey Weisenberg (D-Long Beach).

Under Leandra's Law, those convicted of driving drunk (.08 BAC or higher) with a child in the car are charged with a class E felony and face up to 4 years in prison. Cases where children are killed or seriously injured while riding in a car with a drunk driver carry additional penalties. Drunk drivers who cause the death of a child riding in their car face up to 25 years in prison. Those who seriously injure their child passenger in a DWI crash face up to 15 years in prison.

An additional provision of Leandra's Law, which takes effect on August 15<sup>th</sup>, prohibits any driver convicted of a DWI offense, including first time offenders, from operating a vehicle without having an ignition interlock installed. An ignition interlock is a breath test device linked to a vehicle's ignition system which prevents the vehicle from starting if it detects alcohol in the driver's breath. According to MADD, interlocks have been proven to reduce repeat drunk driving offenses by an average of 64 percent.

Leandra's Law is named after 11 year old Leandra Rosado, who was killed while riding in a car that crashed along the Henry Hudson Parkway last October. The driver of the car, who was the mother of one of Leandra's friends, was arrested for DWI. Leandra's father, Lenny Rosado, worked with Senator Fuschillo, Senator Dilan, and Assemblyman Weisenberg in fighting to get the law passed. The law took effect on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

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