



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

## Senate approves legislation clearing way for emergency responses

THOMAS F. O'MARA February 16, 2011

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Albany, N.Y., February 15—The New York State Senate has unanimously approved legislation co-sponsored by Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats) to allow emergency medical technicians (EMTs) to carry an automated external defibrillator (AED) in their personal vehicles and to use the AEDs to respond to emergencies during their off-duty hours.

Current state law doesn't allow off-duty EMTs to possess and use the life-saving devices unless they're specifically licensed as a public access defibrillator provider – a time-

consuming and state-imposed expense that O'Mara said doesn't make any sense.

"Our EMTs are highly trained and we should clear the way for them to respond to emergencies and save lives anytime, anywhere, on- or off-duty," said O'Mara. "It's especially important in our rural communities, where it's more common for an off-duty EMT to be the first responder. A rapid response makes all the difference in cardiac emergencies. The availability of more AEDs will save more lives."

The legislation (S.2387) must be approved by the Assembly, where it's currently in the Assembly Health Committee, and be signed by Governor Andrew Cuomo before becoming law.