



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Owen H. Johnson

Senator Owen H. Johnson Supported Passage of Stricter Texting-While-Driving Law

OWEN H. JOHNSON May 4, 2011

| ISSUE: **CRIME**

Senator Owen H. Johnson supported a bill (S.998B) that passed the Senate today making it easier for law enforcement to crack down on texting-while-driving offenses and prevent tragic accidents caused by drivers distracted by texting.

The bill would make text messaging while driving a primary violation rather than a secondary violation. Under the current law, a driver could only be cited for texting-while-driving if another violation, such as speeding, is also being cited.

“Texting while driving is one of the most dangerous driver distractions today,” Senator Johnson said. “The legislation we passed in the Senate sends the message that there will be consequences for those who continue to risk our lives with their careless conduct.”

According to studies done by the American Automobile Association (AAA), any activity that takes a driver’s attention off the road for more than two seconds can double a driver’s risk of a crash. The huge increase in text messaging as a form of communication, particularly among young people, has led to a new form of distracted driving which is being blamed for

tragedies throughout New York State and the nation.