



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Hugh T. Farley

Senator Farley and Assemblyman Tedisco join families, advocates to call for new law to terminate driving privileges forever for repeat drunk, dangerous drivers

HUGH T. FARLEY February 17, 2012

| ISSUE: **CRIME**

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State Senator Hugh T. Farley (R, C, I - Schenectady) and Assemblyman Jim Tedisco (R,C,I-Schenectady-Saratoga) joined with advocates and families who lost loved ones to drunk and dangerous drivers to call for new legislation to help make our roads safer by permanently terminating the driver's license privileges for serial drunk and dangerous drivers.

On Wednesday, Anthony Gallo, who had 10 suspensions on his driver's license, was indicted for aggravated vehicular homicide among other charges for being under the influence of drugs and running a red light when he struck and killed 19-year-old Cassandra Boone in November 2011 as she walked across the street at the intersection of Erie Boulevard and State Street in Schenectady.

Tedisco and Farley's measure, (A.8934A/S.6496), would permanently terminate all driving privileges of an individual convicted of a combination of three or more of the following: a conviction for DWI/DUI; actions causing an accident where there is personal injury to another in the course of that accident where the person is at fault; or vehicular manslaughter.

Currently, there is no provision in state law that permanently terminates driving privileges for those who are chronic drunk and/or dangerous drivers.

"Unlike the right to be safe on New York's roads, driving is not a right, it's a privilege. Families have a right to know they and their loved ones will be protected from serial drunk and dangerous drivers who become human weapons when they get behind the wheel of a vehicle," said Tedisco, former Minority Leader and current Assistant Minority Whip. "The message of this bill for drunk and dangerous drivers is 'three strikes and you're out. You lose your driving privileges in New York State forever.'"

"There have been far too many incidents in the Capital Region, and throughout the State, of fatal accidents involving persons who have had their driver's license suspended and revoked multiple times," said Senator Farley. "We need to break this cycle and better protect the public from these repeat offenders. This legislation makes it clear that a driver will face permanent consequences for their actions."

Among other cases, the bill, known as “Charlotte’s Law,” was inspired by the family of Charlotte Gallo, a senior citizen from Schenectady, New York, who was killed by a truck failing to yield to a pedestrian near Proctor’s Theatre on January 2, 2010. Charlotte was leaving Proctors after a night of volunteering for the organization. The individual driving the truck had a long history of being a persistent violator of DWI and DUI laws including a previous accident where he hit someone while drunk and caused serious personal injury.

Under New York law, a third DWI/DWAI conviction is a Class D felony with a maximum fine of \$10,000 and up to 7 years in prison with a 1-year minimum driver’s license revocation. Charlotte’s Law, which would be the toughest of its kind in the nation, would keep the current prison term and fine but forever take away driver’s license privileges for serial drunk and dangerous drivers who have three strikes on their record.

"The only hope I had for justice I have received since my former mother in law, Charlotte Gallo, was killed on January 2, 2010, by a motorist who had over 10 previous traffic violations was when Assemblyman Tedisco and Senator Farley signed on to sponsor Charlotte's Law. This legislation will prevent other repeat offenders from ever driving again. Up until now, a one-year license revocation has been the only action taken to prevent these serial offenders from driving. Now, with Charlotte's Law, their privilege to drive will be permanently terminated in New York State and our highways will be safer. The passage of this law will give closure to our family and to all the families who have lost a loved one to someone who has numerous violations on their driver’s license and continues to drive," Dr. Linda Rozell-Shannon, who served as a policy analyst for over 20 years for the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, and is the former daughter in law to Charlotte Gallo.

"This bill is the right approach to getting chronic drunk and dangerous drivers permanently off our streets. Why should we allow drunk drivers when they are recidivists the privilege of keeping their driver’s licenses? Not only should they do the time for the crimes but when

they get out they should never be allowed to get behind the wheel of a car again. Never, ever," said Doris Aiken, President of R.I.D. (Remove Intoxicated Drivers).