



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Senate Passes Bill to Increase Public Disclosure About the Safety of Rides and Amusements

STEPHEN M. SALAND March 26, 2012

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Measure Requires Enhanced Access to Safety Records

The New York State Senate today passed a measure that will help provide the public with more information about amusement parks, carnivals or county fairs so that they can make informed safety decisions. The bill (S.5868A) requires the state and amusement operators to post valuable safety information online and at a ride's location.

The state Department of Labor (DOL) is responsible for the licensing and inspection of all amusement devices and attractions operating in New York. The agency maintains an impressive record in protecting county fair, amusement park and carnival visitors here in New York, and, with 1.7 billion visitors nationally in 2010 alone, the amusement industry has also compiled an overwhelmingly positive safety record.

In recent years and after inquiries into public disclosure by Senator Gallivan, some information about ride and amusement operations has begun to be posted online by DOL to allow public review. However, this safety information is limited in scope. This bill addresses the need to update, clarify and make available more of the information used to determine a ride's fitness for public use.

This legislation directs DOL to make consumer-relevant safety and licensing information available through a publicly accessible website and requires posting of the web address on signs at the carnivals, fairs, and amusement parks.

The information to be posted online, already routinely compiled by DOL, would include: the date of application submission; approval criteria; full text of visiting inspector's report; issued fines or violations after permit issuance; proof of violation redress; history of reported accidents or injuries as reported by DOL; and the full text of any safety investigations. Confidential or proprietary information would be excluded.

The bill will be sent to the Assembly.

SENATE PASSES BILL TO INCREASE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE ABOUT THE SAFETY OF RIDES AND AMUSEMENTS

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"When families visit amusement parks, carnivals or county fairs, they essentially put their lives into the hands of the park operator, who they must trust to be safe, responsible, and law-abiding," Senator Gallivan said. "This legislation increases the accessibility to safety records and gives consumers the tools and information to make that determination for themselves."

"This is another common-sense measure to allow greater public access to important records," Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos said. "I applaud Senator Gallivan for increasing the public's ability to access safety and regulatory information that can help individuals make educated choices about the rides that are appropriate for them and their families."

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