



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senate Transportation Committee Approves Legislation Raising Penalties for Hit and Run Drivers

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. April 18, 2012

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Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick), Chairman of the Senate's Transportation Committee today announced that the committee has passed legislation which would raise penalties for drivers who hit and run.

"Drivers who flee the scene of an accident show no regard for the welfare of others. It's a heartless crime that deserves a tougher penalty. This legislation will give prosecutors stronger tools to take hit and run drivers off the roads," said Senator Fuschillo.

The legislation (S2918, Senator Golden) would raise the penalties for drivers who leave the scene of an accident without stopping and/or reporting it from a class A misdemeanor to a class E felony. Penalties would also be increased from a class E felony to a class D felony for repeat offenders and hit and run drivers who injure others. Drivers who flee from the scene of an accident where someone was killed would face class C felony charges under the proposed law, as opposed to class D felony charges under the current law.

In addition, the Committee also approved legislation which would:

* Double the fine for drivers who commit moving violations within a “school safety zone” during school hours. A school safety zone would be defined as an area within a quarter-mile radius of a public school or 200 yards in New York City (S935, Senator Marcellino).

* Create stronger penalties for drivers who drive without insurance (S2863, Senator LaValle).

* Require that handicapped accessibility lanes in parking lots be at least 8 feet wide to ensure that individuals with disabilities can get into and out of their vehicles (S3170, Senator McDonald).

* Require an independent, forensic audit of the MTA’s finances by a certified public accounting firm (S4637A, Senator Lanza).