



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Senate Passes Ritchie Motorcycle Safety Bill

PATTY RITCHIE May 31, 2012

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Bipartisan Measure Sparked by Oswego County Motorcycle Deaths

State Senator Patty Ritchie has announced her bill that would improve motorcycle safety by including awareness training in the DMV's mandatory, pre-licensing courses has passed unanimously in the Senate.

“This is just one more step towards making our highways safer for both motorcyclists and those traveling on four wheels,” said Senator Ritchie. “By teaching people how to properly share the road, we can cut down on accidents and help save lives.”

The measure, S.7138, was prompted by a recent uptick in motorcycle related accidents in our region, including accidents that claimed the lives of four motorcyclists already in Oswego this year—more than any full year since 2008.

According to the most recent data from the New York State DMV, there were 152 fatalities from 5,150 motorcycle accidents in 2009.

The bipartisan bill, cosponsored by Senator Kevin Parker of Brooklyn, amends Vehicle and Traffic Law to create a motorcycle safety and awareness component to the required five-hour driving course. Specific requirements would be set by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles.

In recent years, more New Yorkers are choosing to get around on motorcycles. In Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties, the number of registered motorcycles increased 16 percent from 2007 to 2010, to 13,500 on the road.

Jefferson County saw the largest percentage increase during that time period (27 percent), while Oswego had the highest number of registered bikes (5,017).

The bill has strong support from motorcycle groups and enthusiasts in New York State, including New York Rider Magazine.