New York Senate Takes Steps To Curb Dangerous Driving

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The New York State Senate passed two bills intended to keep dangerous drivers off our streets and increase penalties for drivers who injure or kill pedestrians or other drivers.

One piece (S.1835), sponsored by Senator John Flanagan (2nd Senate District) would toughen criminal penalties for motorists who injure or kill pedestrians or other drivers as a result of dangerous and unlawful driving.

"The need for New York to establish a policy that holds those who knowingly break the laws of our roadways more accountable for their actions is unmistakable," Senator Flanagan said. "Far too many negligent and outright law-breaking drivers are permitted to avoid proper punishment for the problems they cause on our roads and the damage that they inflict on innocent families across New York State. This legislation will help end that and send the message to those who flout the rules of our state's roads that they must respect their fellow motorists or be subject to increased punishment."

This bill would establish the felony crimes of Vehicular Assault and Vehicular Manslaughter for drivers who either injure or kill pedestrians or other motorists while using alcohol, evading police officers in dangerous, often high-speed chases, and driving with suspended or revoked license.

Additionally, the Senate passed legislation (S.562) that would require breathalyzer tests for drivers involved in accidents causing serious physical injury or death.

By requiring that drivers involved in automobile accidents that cause serious physical injury or death are administered breathalyzer tests, law enforcement officials can immediately determine whether alcohol may have played a role in the crash. Armed with the results of the breathalyzer test, officials can investigate accordingly and victims can be left with no doubt as to whether alcohol was a factor in the crash.

Both bills were sent to the Assembly.