



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senate Transportation Committee Approves Legislation to Protect New Yorkers From Drunk Drivers

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Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick), Chairman of the Senate's Transportation Committee, today announced that the Committee has approved legislation to help strengthen the state's DUI laws and protect individuals from drunk drivers.

"Drunk drivers endanger innocent lives every time they choose to get behind the wheel, regardless of the type of vehicle. Strengthening our laws and closing legal loopholes will give law enforcement greater tools to catch and prosecute drunk drivers and help to make our roads safer for everyone," said Senator Fuschillo.

The drunk driving legislation approved by the committee would:

- Strengthen Leandra's Law to ensure that offenders comply with the provision of the law requiring alcohol monitoring. The legislation closes an unintended legal loophole which is allowing drunk drivers to avoid using ignition interlock as required under the law (S1941, Sen. Fuschillo).

- Raise the penalties for boating under the influence (BUI) to ensure that BUI offenders face the same strong penalties that they would if they were driving drunk in a car (S771, Sen. Fuschillo).

- Link DUI, BUI, and SUI offenses together when determining whether an individual is a repeat offender. This will help ensure that offenders with prior alcohol convictions face the appropriate penalties (S1790, Sen. DeFrancisco).

- Allow for testing of breath, blood or urine in all cases where a motor vehicle crash results in death or injury. This would enable greater enforcement of DUI and DWAI laws involving motor vehicle accidents (S1446, Sen. Flanagan).

- Require ignition interlock devices for school buses to further protect children from intoxicated bus drivers (S1347, Sen. Maziarz).

In addition, the Committee also approved legislation which would:

- Require all boaters to obtain a boating safety certificate in order to operate a vessel to ensure that they are aware of basic safety procedures and the rules of the water (S 747, Sen. Fuschillo).

- Prohibit individuals holding a learner's permit from using any mobile telephone while driving, including hands-free. This would help ensure that these inexperienced drivers, most of whom are teenagers, are not further distracted while learning how to drive. (S1511, Sen. Marcellino).

- Prohibit registered sex offenders from holding or being issued a commercial driver's license to operate a passenger or school bus (S1519, Sen. Marcellino).

- Increase the penalties for driving with a suspended or revoked license (S1919, Sen. Addabbo).

- Require a mandatory 60 day license suspension for individuals convicted of passing a stopped school bus with its lights flashing two or more times in a ten-year period. This is the same penalty for drivers who are convicted of speeding two or more times in a highway work-zone within a ten year period (S1878, Sen. Bonacic).

- Raise the penalties for hit and run crimes so that they are commensurate with charges faced by a drunk driver who causes physical injury or death and remains at the scene of the accident. This would help ensure that drivers do not receive a legal benefit for leaving the scene of an accident. (S2503, Sen. Golden).