



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## Ritchie Motorcycle Safety Bill Unanimously Passes Senate

PATTY RITCHIE June 13, 2013

| ISSUE: **TRANSPORTATION, THRUWAY AUTHORITY, HIGHWAYS, DMV (DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES)**

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

"Today, more and more people are using motorcycles to get around, and that means that all drivers need to be more aware of how to safely share the road" said State Senator Patty Ritchie.

"By adding this training to the DMV's pre-licensing courses, we can help ensure that new drivers are given the information they need—right from the start—to be more cognizant of motorcycles when they are out on the road."

The measure (S.2113) comes in the wake of a series of horrific motorcycle crashes that claimed the lives of a number of local bikers.

Senator Ritchie's research found that the number of motorcycles on New York roadways has increased 12 percent over five years—but motorcycles registrations in Jefferson, St. Lawrence and Oswego Counties grew by 31 percent, 20 percent and 16 percent, respectively, during that time period, to more than 13,800.

As the number of motorcycles increased, so did the number of accidents. In 2010, there were 5,570 motorcycle accidents across the state, including 180 deaths. More than half of accidents involved a collision with another vehicle.

In her effort to increase public awareness of motorcyclists and highway safety, Senator Ritchie also recently joined with the New York State Thruway to urge drivers to use greater caution. Earlier this month, at the request of Senator Ritchie, the Thruway used its electronic Variable Message Signs (VMS) to flash the messages "Watch for Motorcycles" and "Share the Road" on sign boards across their system, from Buffalo to the New York City line—and also including Central New York. The signs could be seen by an estimated 750,000 motorists who use the highway each day.

Senator Ritchie's bill, which also passed unanimously in the Senate in 2012, was sent to the Assembly.