



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

## Senator Fuschillo Reminds Residents: Be Safe, Be Smart, Don't Drink and Drive This Holiday Weekend

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. November 25, 2013

| ISSUE: **DRUNK DRIVING**

With the Thanksgiving holiday approaching, and Thanksgiving Eve being one of the busiest bar nights of the year, Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) is urging residents to be safe, be smart, and don't drink and drive. Senator Fuschillo also reminded drivers that New York State's DWI laws are among the strongest in the country and that police will be stepping up enforcement to catch drunk drivers.

"Thanksgiving is a joyous time when we get together with family and friends, but it's important to celebrate responsibly. If you plan on drinking, choose a designated driver or safe way home ahead of time. New York has some the country's toughest DWI laws, and the police will be out enforcing them aggressively. Make the smart and responsible choice so that you spend the holidays with your loved ones, not behind bars. Don't drink and drive," said Senator Fuschillo, Chairman of the Senate's Transportation Committee and author of numerous drunk driving laws.

Senator Fuschillo reminded drivers about the severe consequences they can face if they are caught drinking and driving, including:

- A prison sentence of up to 25 years for killing someone in a DWI crash;

- A prison sentence of up to 15 for seriously injuring someone in a DWI crash:
- A prison sentence of up to 4 years for driving drunk with a child in the car; and
- Mandatory ignition interlock use for committing any DWI offense, along with steep financial costs such as court imposed fines, attorney fees, and higher insurance rates.

Additionally, a new law authored by Senator Fuschillo to strengthen Leandra's Law took effect November 1st. The law will ensure that more convicted drunk drivers use ignition interlocks as required by law. It will also make it more difficult for drivers to claim they will not operate a car and enhance penalties for individuals who try to escape the law through fraud.

Many law enforcement agencies will be enhancing their already strong enforcement of New York's DWI laws this holiday weekend. Police will be conducting higher visibility enforcement, sobriety checkpoints, and/or increasing patrols in an effort to take drunk drivers off the road.

There were over 48,000 DWI arrests in New York State in 2012, according to the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services.