



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

State Senator Jeff Klein passes legislation to reduce New York City speed limit

JEFFREY D. KLEIN June 20, 2014

| ISSUE: **TRANSPORTATION, NEW YORK CITY**

ALBANY, NY – New York City's speed limit will lower to 25 miles per hour in an effort to prevent fatalities, thanks to legislation sponsored by state Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx / Westchester), passed the State Senate 58-2 on Thursday night.

The legislation, in line with Mayor Bill deBlasio's Vision Zero plan, will allow New York City's Department of Transportation to uniformly reduce the current 30 mile per hour speed limit to 25 on roadways where no signs are posted. It will also create a community board input process when the agency proposes a speed limit change on a street in excess of five miles per hour.

"Slowing down by even five miles per hour is going to save lives that otherwise could have been lost in senseless traffic accidents. I wholeheartedly support Mayor Bill deBlasio's Vision Zero plan and I'm proud that I was able to deliver another victory to keep the city's streets safer," **said state Senator Klein.**

Earlier this week, leaders from Community Boards 2, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 expressed their support for legislation that would give community boards a role in lowering speed limits. This spring, Senator Klein delivered an additional 120 speed cameras for New York City's school zones to protect children and their families.

Martin Lucaj, the son of local resident Maria Lucaj who tragically died as she walked across the street at the intersection of Neill and Williamsbridge Avenues late last year, praised Senator Klein, together with his brothers, Robert and John, for ushering this legislation through the State Senate.

“New York City has always been home to densely packed roads and streets, but the importance of traffic safety truly hit home for me when my mother, Maria Lucaj, was the victim of a car going too fast to break in time. The fact of the matter is if the car had been going slower, my mother would still be with us today. By lowering the speed limit by 5 miles per hour – or more – I know that lives will be saved. My brothers and I are fully committed to ensuring that our mother’s death was not in vain by doing everything in our power to see to it that no one else suffers a similar tragedy by strongly supporting new laws for traffic safety. On behalf of my brothers, Robert and John, I’d like to thank Senator Klein for making traffic safety a priority and for taking action to protect pedestrians,” **said Martin Lucaj.**

Traffic safety advocates and city officials heralded the passage of the speed limit bills in both the Senate and the Assembly.

“Traffic safety is of the utmost importance to New Yorkers, and today the State heard our commitment to safe streets loud and clear. Every life lost to traffic violence is one too many, and this common sense legislation is long overdue. By allowing New York City to set its own speed limit to 25 mph, this law will slow cars down and save countless lives. I thank the State for acting swiftly at the end of the legislative session to help us protect the public safety of every New Yorker. I would like to thank Speaker Silver and Senator Klein for their work in helping to make New York's streets safer,” **said City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito.**

"I welcome the news from Albany this morning on their 11th hour passage of a bill that will literally save lives. It means so much to so many that they got this done before closing session. A 25 mph speed limit across the city will prevent more death on our streets and ensure drivers take more care when they are behind the wheel. This is the culmination of months of work by so many: the leadership of our Mayor Bill de Blasio; our Speaker, Melissa Mark-Viverito; all of my colleagues in the City Council; Senator Klein, Speaker Silver and Assemblyman O'Donnell; Transportation Alternatives who spent copious amounts of time in Albany working with legislators to get this done; and of course, the brave and dedicated members of Families for Safer Streets, whose tenacity in the face of heartbreaking tragedy was a lynchpin in this effort. With the stronger enforcement now needed on behalf of the NYPD, we will see the culture change necessary in New York City to achieve Vision Zero,” **said New York City Council Transportation Chair Ydanis Rodriguez.**

“The Senate and the Assembly are lifesavers,” said **Paul Steely White, executive director of Transportation Alternatives**. “We would like to thank Senator Klein, Assembly Speaker Silver and Assembly Member O’Donnell for introducing these bills, and we commend their colleagues for stepping up to support a 25 mile per hour speed limit to make New York City’s streets safer. We also thank Senators Avella, Dilan and Felder. Because they did the right thing, we’ll be able to save scores of lives and prevent thousands of injuries every year,” **Steely White added**.

“The 25 mile per hour speed limit bill is a step in the right direction and signifies important progress to making the streets in New York less lethal. Families for Safe Streets thanks Senator Klein for introducing the bill in the Senate and for his leadership and hard work to get it passed. We also want to thank Assemblyman O’Donnell and Speaker Silver for their leadership in the Assembly and Mayor De Blasio and the DOT for the city’s commitment to Vision Zero,” said **Aaron Charlop-Powers, of Families for Safer Streets**.

“But let’s be clear - this is a labor fueled by grief. We are heartened by this law but we are not celebrating. Our loved ones were killed or injured in traffic -- we have a long way to go until our streets are safe, and we say to everyone who will listen: this is a matter of life and death and we need to press on,” **Charlop-Powers said**.

Studies reveal that reducing the speed limit to 25 miles per hour increases a person’s chances of survival to 1 in 10 if struck by a vehicle. At 35 miles per hour there is a 1 in 5 chance of survival. In New York City over 250 people die and over 4,000 are severely injured in traffic accidents annually.

The legislation now heads to Governor Andrew Cuomo who is expected to sign it into law.