



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

## Important Bills Passed This Week: Protecting Personal Information Of Travelers, Providing Grants For Blood Drives, and More!

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS May 28, 2015



### IMPORTANT BILLS PASSED THIS WEEK

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**Helping Military Spouses Continue Profession in NYS:** States often differ in their specific licensing requirements and cause military spouses to face delays and the expense of re-licensure to continue practicing their professions after moving to a new state to accommodate their spouse's service. Senate bill S.2947 allows New York State to modify licensing requirements and processes for these military spouses without impacting the standards of the state.

**Harsher Penalties For Drivers Who Endanger Bused Children:** Current law provides for the suspension of a driver's license for the repeated offense of speeding in a construction zone in an effort to prevent injury and death of road workers. However, no such penalty is imposed on drivers who endanger schoolchildren by passing a stopped school bus, Senate bill S.1634 would make two or more counts of passing a stopped school bus within ten years punishable by a 60-day suspension of driving privileges similar to that imposed for speeding in a construction zone.

**Updating Identity Theft Laws and Sentencing:** Many laws have arisen in response to continually changing methods and types of identity theft, such as unlawful possession of personal information and skimming devices used to gather personal information. Senate Bill S148, sponsored by Democratic Senator Daniel Squadron, consolidates identity theft laws into a single distinct section of penal code and establishes a range of penalties. It also establishes enhanced sentences for stealing the identity of a minor, a vulnerable elderly or disabled person, or deployed military personnel.

**Protecting Personal Information of Travelers Who Pay Tolls and Fares:** Heavy traffic, limited availability of toll lanes and record public ridership have, for many, made the use of electronic toll and fare payment systems like E-ZPass and MetroCard into necessities rather than convenient options. Many motorists and straphangers who would otherwise forgo the convenience of these systems to reduce exposure of their personal information now find that choice impractical. Senate bill S.2173 would designate electronic toll and fare account holder records as confidential and accessible only by the account holder and law enforcement agencies with few exceptions.

**Providing Grants For Blood Drives:** When schools and community organizations hold blood drives, the cost of drawing and storing the blood is usually covered by the blood bank, but the costs of promotional materials, event space and mailings are borne by hosting

organization. Senate Bill S.3804, sponsored by Democratic Senator Kevin Parker, defrays the cost to hosting organizations and encourages them to hold more blood drives more frequently, thereby increasing the amount of blood available.