



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Senate passes Griffo's bill to strengthen penalties for aiming laser pointers at aircraft

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO June 8, 2016

| ISSUE: [AIR OR AIRPLANE](#), [TRANSPORTATION](#), [CRIME](#), [LAW ENFORCEMENT](#)



ALBANY – The New York State Senate on Wednesday approved a bill sponsored by State Senator Joseph Griffo that would increase the penalties against people who intentionally aim laser pointers at aircraft.

In response to this rapidly growing threat to airline safety, Senator Griffo's bill – [S6815](#) – would provide state and local law enforcement agencies with greater authority to prevent

and punish individuals who use laser pointers that can distract pilots and endanger passengers.

**Senator Griffo, R-Rome, said,** “Intentionally shining laser pointers into the cockpit of flying aircrafts can put hundreds of passengers at risk of crashing, yet current state law designed to prevent this dangerous act carries no more than a slap on the wrist. By punishing this reckless behavior more severely, my bill would give state and local law enforcement more authority to hold people accountable for threatening the safety of our skies.”

According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), aiming a laser at an aircraft is a serious safety risk and a federal crime because high-powered lasers can completely incapacitate pilots’ vision as they are trying to fly safely to their destinations. The total number of laser strikes in the United States is growing rapidly, including several cases [here in New York](#). The FAA recorded 5,352 laser strikes from January to October 2015, which is a significant increase from 2,837 strikes for all of 2010.

This measure strengthens the penalties for the crimes of second-degree directing a laser pointer at an aircraft from a Class A misdemeanor to a Class D felony, and first-degree directing a laser pointer at an aircraft from a Class E felony to a Class B felony.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.

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RELATED LEGISLATION

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**2015-S6815**

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- Introduced
  - - In Committee Assembly
    - In Committee Senate
  - - On Floor Calendar Assembly
    - On Floor Calendar Senate
  - - Passed Assembly
    - Passed Senate
  - Delivered to Governor
  - Signed By Governor
  -

Increases the severity of penalties for directing a laser at an aircraft offenses

February 25, 2016

In Assembly Committee

Sponsored by **Joseph A. Griffo**

Do you support this bill?