



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Hugh T. Farley

## SEN. FARLEY REPORTS SENATE STRENGTHENS PENALTIES FOR AIMING LASER POINTERS AT AIRCRAFT

SENATOR HUGH T. FARLEY June 9, 2016



State Senator Hugh T. Farley (R, C, I – Schenectady) announced that he and his colleagues in the New York State Senate passed a measure to further prevent the extremely dangerous activity of directing laser pointers at aircraft. Bill S6815 provides state and local law enforcement with greater authority to prevent and punish individuals who use laser pointers that can distract pilots and endanger airline safety.

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 in 2015, which is a significant increase from 2,837 strikes for all of 2010.

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

The bill has been sent to the Assembly.