



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Tedisco

## Sen. Tedisco, Supervisor DeLucia, Sheriff Zurlo, County Clerk Hayner Kick-off Safe Summer Bike Helmet Program to Encourage Kids to Wear Helmets

SENATOR JAMES TEDISCO July 5, 2017



Children in Saratoga and Schenectady Counties and across the greater Capital Region will have an added incentive to stay safe this summer as Senator Jim Tedisco (R,C,I,REF-Glenville) is partnering with local officials and businesses and 16 area police departments to launch the 2017 Safe Summer Bike Helmet program.

To celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the public safety program, Senator Tedisco today scooped free ice cream cones donated by Stewart's Shops for kids at the Town of Malta's summer camp.

This year's Safe Summer Program will distribute 5,000 "good tickets" for free ice cream cones to reward children who wear their helmets while bicycling, skateboarding, and rollerblading, and give free bike helmets to kids who need one.

Tedisco's program uses positive reinforcement to get all neighborhood kids into the habit of wearing their helmets for safe biking and promotes positive interactions between children and law enforcement. The Safe Summer program is made possible thanks to donations from participating businesses: **Stewart's Shops, Friendly's, Hayner's Ice Cream Hall of Fame in Halfmoon** and **Ben & Jerry's**. The law firm of **Martin, Harding and Mazzotti LLP** is donating hundreds of new bike helmets to police departments in the 49<sup>th</sup> Senate District to distribute to children who need them.

"Summer is the season for kids to have fun but we can't ever forget that they need to keep safety in mind. I want children to enjoy the summer but I also want them to be safe when they're riding their bicycles. My Safe Summer program reminds kids to wear their helmets while rewarding good behavior with coupons for free ice cream," said Senator Tedisco. "This program is a true community partnership among businesses, law enforcement, government and parents and it's truly a model for how caring people can come together and promote a fun and safe environment for children. Safe Summer also provides positive interactions between law enforcement and kids."

It's the law in New York State that children up to age 14 must wear a bicycle helmet or parents could face \$50 fine. According to the [New York State Department of Health](#), an average of 54 New Yorkers are killed each year in bicycle crashes and 19,000 residents are

treated at a hospital due to bike-related injuries. Head injuries are the leading cause of death and permanent disability in bicycle crashes, accounting for more than 60 percent of bike-related deaths. The cost of a bicycle helmet is approximately \$20.00. The average charge for a hospital stay due to a bicycle related brain injury is \$23,000 with an average length of stay of four days. In New York, annual hospitalization charges related to care for persons with a bicycle related brain injury is \$20 million.

The Safe Summer Program aims to address these alarming statistics by using positive reinforcement to get all neighborhood kids into the habit of wearing their helmets for safe biking, in-line skating, or riding a skateboard or scooter.

“Bicycle helmet safety is a very important topic to highlight because the dangers are severe. All citizens, especially parents, should be grateful to Senator Jim Tedisco for taking such a proactive leadership role in educating everyone as to the dangers of riding without a helmet and in identifying the proper safety precautions. The Town of Malta is honored and proud to host this ‘Safe Summer’ event, that is so dear to Senator Tedisco, for the benefit of all who ride bicycles,” said Malta Town Supervisor Vincent DeLucia.

“The safety of our children is priority number one. The Safe Summer Bike Helmet Program allows us to pass on simple, yet effective ways to teach kids how to safely handle their bicycles in a fun atmosphere. I want to thank Senator Tedisco for his leadership in offering this program to help protect our kids each and every year,” said Saratoga County Sheriff Michael Zurlo.

“Senator Tedisco's Safe Summer kickoff program is a fun event that reminds children about the importance of wearing a helmet while riding a bicycle this summer. With school now in summer recess, motorists should be especially mindful to slow down and anticipate children and adults riding their bikes along and near our busy roadways. Many thanks to Senator

Tedisco for putting together this important educational event,” said Saratoga County Clerk Craig Hayner which oversees the Saratoga County Department of Motor Vehicle Offices. He, along with his wife Carolyn are owners of Hayner’s Ice Cream Hall of Fame in Halfmoon, NY.

“We are proud to expand our partnership with the Safe Summer program, and continue to encourage kids to wear those helmets. Ice cream is a great reward, no matter what flavor you choose!” said Maria D’Amelia, Stewart’s Shops spokesperson.

“Senator Tedisco’s Safe Summer Program is a great program and we’re proud to be part of it. Getting helmets in the hands of children who need them and raising awareness about bicycle safety plays a vital role in protecting individuals in our communities, both young and old. Summer is a great time of year, we want everyone to be able to enjoy it to the fullest and if we can play a small role in that, we’re honored to do it,” said Paul B. Harding, Managing Partner.

“Martin, Harding & Mazzotti LLP is proud to once again support Senator Tedisco’s Safe Summer Program. Our firm sees first-hand the life changing effects that a brain injury can have on those injured and their families. It’s our hope that by providing free bike helmets we can help raise awareness for bicycle safety and make our communities a safer place for everyone,” said Daniel P. Dagostino, Supervising Attorney.

Participating police departments that will distribute free ice cream coupons and bike helmets to kids include: **Saratoga County Sheriff, Schenectady County Sheriff, Fulton County Sheriff, Hamilton County Sheriff, Herkimer County Sheriff, Glenville Police, Clifton Park Town Security, Saratoga Springs Police, Ballston Spa Police, Scotia Police, Galway Police, City of Schenectady Police, Niskayuna Police, Rotterdam Police, Gloversville Police, and Johnstown Police.**

