



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

Seward, Citing Police & Public Safety Concerns, Calls for Repeal of Green Light Law

JEFF BISHOP, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR February 25, 2020

| ISSUE: **PUBLIC SAFETY, POLICE PROTECTION, GREEN LIGHT LAW**



ALBANY, 02/25/20 -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I/Ref – Oneonta) today joined members of the Senate Republican Conference calling for the repeal of the “Green Light Law.” An amendment brought to the floor of the senate to begin the repeal process was defeated along party lines, with all Democrats voting against repeal.

Senator James L. Seward said, **“I voted against the ‘Green Light Law’ last year because the thought of giving a driver’s license, a secure identification document, to someone who is**

intentionally breaking the law was inconceivable. Now we are seeing additional consequences of this bad public policy – putting law enforcement agents and the public at risk while allowing dangerous criminals to avoid detection. We cannot wait any longer to repeal this dangerous law.”

Earlier this week, Senator Seward along with other Republican members of the senate and assembly met with U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials for a briefing detailing how the state’s Green Light Law has prohibited the state Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) from providing critical information to DHS and other law enforcement agencies.

“Sharing of information is critical for law enforcement and New York has shut down a key tool to stop human trafficking, drug smuggling, and gang activity. It is only a matter of time before the ‘Green Light Law’ leads to a real tragedy,” added Seward.

The so-called “Green Light Law” (S1747B) passed the senate and was signed into law last year, allowing illegal immigrants to obtain drivers’ licenses. Presented by its supporters as the “same law” adopted in other states, New York’s backdoor “Sanctuary State” version contained a provision that prevents the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and other border protection agencies from accessing records contained in the state’s Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) – something no other state does.

Earlier this month, DHS announced a suspension on New Yorkers’ enrollment eligibility for multiple “Trusted Traveler” programs in direct response to the “Green Light Law’s” implementation. According to federal officials, the integrity of these popular international travel programs could no longer be guaranteed due to the statewide block on DMV information sharing.

The “Green Light Law” prevents U.S. Customs and Border Protection and other federal agencies from accessing DMV data used in crucial law enforcement operations, as well as trade, travel, and homeland security matters. Information sharing between New York and

the Federal Government had been used to investigate and apprehend hundreds of terrorists, drug traffickers, human traffickers, and financial criminals, among others who pose threats to national security and the public safety of New Yorkers.

Governor Cuomo has changed his position multiple times on information sharing with federal officials since the suspension of Trusted Traveler programs. However, because the governor cannot single-handedly change a policy he signed into law, the state legislature is the only body that can begin to fix the public safety crisis Democrats created last year.