



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## Press Conference: Senators Robert Jackson, Brad Hoylman, Andrew Gounardes and Community Leaders Advocate for FURIOUS Act and Other Legislation to Combat Illegal Street Racing

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL May 26, 2021

| ISSUE: **ILLEGAL STREET RACING, SD 27, SENATOR BRAD HOYLMAN, FURIOUS ACT**

NEW YORK — State Senators Robert Jackson, Brad Hoylman, Andrew Gounardes and Community Leaders will hold a press conference on Thursday, May 27, at 10 a.m. in Inwood. Hoylman, Jackson and others are speaking in support of the FURIOUS Act ([S.77/A.579](#)), which would authorize New York City to operate its speed camera program overnight and on weekends in areas that have been shown to be hot spots for illegal street racing. The bill would also change New York’s laws on races and speed contests to address prior case law that makes it difficult to hold racers accountable for violating those laws if they did not pre-plan a race course. Additionally they are advocating for [S.784A](#), which would set a 95 decibel limit for motorcycle exhaust and mufflers or 60 decibels for car mufflers and exhaust systems. The law would require any police vehicle to be equipped with a decibel reader and increase the maximum fine for loud exhaust from \$125 to \$1,000.

### WHO:

- Senator Brad Hoylman
- Senator Robert Jackson

- Senator Andrew Gounardes
- City Council Candidate Johanna Garcia
- Advocates including:
  - Tanya Bonner, Chair of Washington Heights and Inwood Noise Task Force
  - Representatives of Washington Heights and Inwood for Respectable Decibel Levels
  - Affected community residents of Washington Heights and Inwood

**WHEN:**

- Thursday, May 27, 10 a.m.

**WHERE:**

- Next to I.S. 218 Salome Urena (corner of Sherman Ave. and Broadway)

**WHY:**

New York City's speed camera program is currently limited by law to operating between 6:00 AM and 10:00 PM on weekdays. This bill would authorize the City to operate speed cameras at any time in neighborhoods where the community has identified illegal street racing as a problem.

On April 26, this bill passed the Senate Transportation Committee after months of complaints from residents all over New York City about near-constant illegal street racing on

streets emptied by the pandemic. [City data](#) shows that 191 complaints were made to 311 about “drag racing” in March 2021, compared to just 13 complaints in March 2019. A total of 2,344 complaints were made between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021 – more than five times the 429 calls made during the same period a year prior.

The FURIOUS Act would amend Section 1180-b of the Vehicle and Traffic Law to allow the City of New York to operate speed cameras at any time in a school speed zone which the City has identified as an area of special concern for illegal street racing, with input from the local community.

It would also amend section 1182 of the Vehicle and Traffic Law to provide that a person shall be deemed to have held a race, exhibition or contest of speed if such person, while speeding, (a) engages in conduct with another person involving a challenge and an acceptance of that challenge, regardless of whether such person or persons intended to engage in such conduct before initiating or accepting such challenge or pre-planned a race course, or (b) races against a clock or other timing device.

This is intended to address precedent created by [People v. Grund](#), a 1964 Court of Appeals decision which found that a violation of Section 1182 of the Vehicle and Traffic Law means that “some race course must have been planned by the competitors along a street.” A [2009 case](#) involving a fatal automobile crash caused by two racing drivers cited Grund and found that “merely speeding down the street, even in tandem with another vehicle, does not constitute a “speed contest” within the meaning of that statute” (Section 1182 of the VTL). Cases as recently as 2017 have resulted in [similar rulings](#).