



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 7, 2024

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## **When will NYS EBT Cards get updated to “Chip Technology”?**

(Patchogue, NY) – NYS Senator Dean Murray (R-Patchogue) recently wrote to New York State (NYS) Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) Commissioner Barbara Guinn to inquire when NYS would be upgrading its Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) debit/benefit cards to chip technology.

Currently, the NYS debit/benefit cards use swipe technology, which has left the cards vulnerable to criminals that install devices known as “skimmers” onto credit card terminals, allowing them to steal the funds from the debit/benefit cards. A recent report by WABC 7's investigative reporter, Kristin Thorne, revealed that in the past year or so, these criminals have used skimmers to steal tens of millions of dollars across New York State.

The issue is that the taxpayers not only pay out the benefits but also must refund the recipients' stolen benefits so they can be made whole. This is one more burden the taxpayer should not have to bear and can and should be corrected as soon as possible.

As the Ranking Minority Member on the NYS Senate Social Services Committee, NYS Senator Dean Murray has been working with the Committee Chairwoman, NYS Senator Roxanne Persaud (D-Brooklyn), to get OTDA to update its technology to the chip-enabled cards.

Once the Channel 7 news story broke, OTDA officials reported that they are in the early stages of moving NYS to chip technology for NY EBT cardholders. Senator Murray says that while he is happy to hear the switch is in the works... "every day that we continue to use the old swipe technology, taxpayers are losing money at the hands of these criminals."

In his letter, Senator Murray asked Commissioner Guinn to step up the efforts and to provide a realistic timeframe for the implementation of the new chip technology.

“By switching to the safer and more secure chip technology, we can all but eliminate the skimmer problem and save millions of dollars for the taxpayers, while also ensuring those in need are getting the help they are supposed to be receiving in a timely fashion,” said NYS **Senator Dean Murray, 3rd Senate District.**

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