



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Senator David J. Valesky Applauds Passage of Legislation to Enable Firefighters to Drive Trucks in Non-Emergency Situations

DAVID J. VALESKY May 21, 2009

As Memorial Day weekend approaches, firefighters and fire trucks will continue to be a parade staple, thanks in part to legislation passed in the New York State Senate today.

The bill, S1624C, provides a clear exemption from federal regulations that require drivers of emergency vehicles to have a Commercial Drivers License. Though the Legislature partially rectified the issue in the Enacted Budget, further clarification was needed. Important duties performed by fire companies, such as training, inspections and parades, were not specifically exempted.

The legislation specifically addresses training, parades, funerals, hydrant maintenance, and commercial building inspections.

“This Memorial Day holiday, as we honor our veterans and those who have served our country, I look forward to marching in parades beside our fire engines and firefighters, who provide parade-goers with much joy and serve as ambassadors on wheels in the community, as they ride proudly down our main streets,” Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida), said.

The Assembly passed corresponding legislation this week, and Governor Paterson is expected to sign the bill into law in advance of the holiday weekend, allowing fire trucks to

be driven in parades.

“Our fire companies and the men and women who serve, many of them as volunteers, should be commended for their bravery, commitment and contributions to their communities,” State Senator Valesky, Vice President Pro-Tempore of the Senate, said. “As a Legislature, we need to do whatever we can to make their jobs easier.”