



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

"Jason's Law" Receives Jumpstart from Seward

JAMES L. SEWARD March 19, 2010

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ALBANY, 03/19/10 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) and Assemblyman Pete Lopez (R/C/I-Schoharie) recently welcomed the Rivenburg family to the Capitol to discuss strategies for strengthening truck driver safety and to advance legislative resolutions urging the federal government to enact "Jason's Law."

The measure (H.R.2156/S.971) would implement a pilot program to establish safe, long-term parking facilities for commercial vehicles. The law is named for Jason Rivenburg, a truck

driver from Schoharie County, who was murdered at an abandoned gas station in South Carolina while resting in his rig.

“Jason’s tragic, senseless death highlights a serious problem facing hard working truck drivers on a daily basis,” said Senator Seward. **“I commend his family for all they are doing to protect other truck drivers, and stand with them in their fight to make sure more children won’t be forced to grow up without a father.”**

Federal law mandates that drivers rest for ten hours after driving for eleven hours straight. Federal law also prohibits driving for more than sixty total hours over a seven day period. Jason was a mere 12 miles from his destination but under the law, was forced to stop and park in a desolate, poorly lit area where he was killed for \$7.

“Despite their personal loss the Rivenburg family has made the issue of ensuring safe rest areas for truck drivers their mission,” said Assemblyman Lopez. “While we continue to support this industry as a significant component of our state economy, we also have an obligation to protect the lives and improve safety for individual drivers.”

If approved by Congress, Jason’s Law would authorize \$20 million annually over six years for grants to states to expand and publicize parking options for commercial vehicles. The fund could be used by states for a variety of purposes, including: building new rest areas with adequate parking, expanding parking near truck stops and at existing facilities, constructing turnouts along the highway system for commercial vehicles, as well as promoting and publicizing available parking options on the highway.

Jason’s wife Hope along with the couple’s three young children and other family members were in Albany this week to witness senate passage of the resolution and were formally introduced in the assembly chamber, where members offered personal support and concern for improving truck driver safety.

Additionally, Senator Seward and Assemblyman Lopez gave the family a working draft of their state legislation that would reinforce the federal initiative. Both legislators will continue to work with the family to develop a broad coalition aimed at improving truck driver safety.

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Photo attached: From left, Senator Seward, Chip Savage, Sandy Hardendorf, Tim Hardendorf, Hope Rivenburg (holding son Joshua Rivenburg), Butch Savage (holding baby Logan Rivenburg), and Cathy Savage (holding baby Hezekiah Rivenburg), Assemblyman Lopez.