



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William T. Stachowski

Senate Passes Stachowski Bill Requiring Motorists to Move Over for Parked Emergency Vehicles

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Senator William T. Stachowski (D, Lake View), today announced that legislation (S.4647-B) he sponsored to protect law enforcement and emergency workers on the state's highways has passed the New York State Senate.

Named the "Ambrose-Searles Move Over Act," the legislation requires highway motorists to move over or slow down when approaching a parked authorized emergency vehicle whose emergency lights are flashing.

“Thousands of law enforcement and emergency workers risk their lives every day to protect the citizens of New York State,” said Senator Stachowski. “Motorists have the utmost responsibility to take extra care when passing those police officers and emergency workers who are stopped on the side of a highway performing their duties. This bill would require motorists to move over if they can or, at the very least, slow down when they see the flashing lights of an emergency vehicle.”

Current law states that motorists must slow down, pull over to the side of the road and yield to passing law enforcement and emergency vehicles. This bill applies to law enforcement and emergency vehicles that are already stopped on the side of a highway. It now requires that motorists change lanes to create additional space and added safety for emergency personnel, and if that is not possible, to slow down to a safe passing speed.

Senator Stachowski said the legislation honors the memory of two police officers, New York State Trooper Robert Ambrose and Onondaga County Deputy Sheriff Glenn M. Searles, as well as others who have tragically lost their lives on the highways while serving the public.

On December 23, 2002 New York State Trooper Robert Ambrose was fatally injured during a routine traffic stop on the New York State Thruway in Yonkers. Trooper Ambrose's vehicle was rear-ended by an intoxicated driver of a sports utility vehicle at a speed in excess of 80 miles per hour. Upon impact, his patrol car burst into flames. Ambrose was burned alive inside his vehicle.

On November 29, 2003, Onondaga County Deputy Sheriff Glenn M. Searles was assisting a motorist whose vehicle had gone off the highway when a second car lost control and struck Deputy Searles, pinning him against his patrol car. Deputy Searles died from his injuries.

The bill was sent to the Assembly.