



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Senator Young: Slow Down, Move Over for Emergency Vehicles Now Law

CATHARINE YOUNG January 14, 2011

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ALBANY - Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) today reminded motorists about a new law that requires vehicles to slow down or move over when an emergency vehicle or law enforcement vehicle is stopped on the side of the road.

The Ambrose-Searles “Move Over” Traffic law took effect on January 1st and is designed to protect emergency responders and law enforcement officials helping motorists.

“One of the most dangerous places for our emergency responders to work is along our state’s highways and roadsides when responding to a traffic incident or roadside fire. This new law will help put a stop to the senseless deaths of emergency responders who are simply doing their jobs by helping stranded motorists,” said Senator Young.

The law was passed in memory of two officers killed in the line of duty by careless drivers. State Trooper Robert Ambrose from Tarrytown, New York was burned alive inside his patrol car in Yonkers after an intoxicated driver rammed into it on Dec. 19, 2002. Onondaga County Deputy Sheriff Glenn

Searles was struck by a passing driver on Nov. 29, 2003, while assisting a stranded vehicle on Interstate 481.

Senator Young said drivers must use care when approaching emergency vehicles with flashing lights. Drivers must reduce speed on all roadways and on highways and roads with multiple lanes the driver must move to the next lane. The only exception is if hazards exist preventing the driver from doing so safely.

Failing to “exercise due care” when approaching a stopped emergency vehicle could result in fines of up to \$275, mandatory state surcharges of either \$80 or \$85, depending on the court, and up to 15 days in jail. The moving violation also would place 3 points on a driver’s license.

Senator Young said that in 2010, 73 of the 160 officers who were killed in the line of duty nationwide were killed by drivers who did not slow down.

“This is about promoting highway safety with a common sense approach that will help to avoid potential lethal collisions,” Senator Young.

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