



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

DMV Plan To Drop Vision Tests Is Short-sighted

JAMES L. SEWARD September 29, 2011

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ONEONTA, 09/29/11 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today called on the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles to reverse plans to eliminate vision test requirements for drivers renewing their licenses.

“The DMV’s plan to drop eye tests for a driver license renewal is short-sighted and reckless,” said Senator Seward. **“Clear vision is essential for safe driving. Allowing motorists to get behind the wheel with even a hint of question in regard to their eye sight is irresponsible.”**

DMV Commissioner Barbara Fiala announced earlier this week the department's plan to change its regulations so that motorists no longer have to submit to a simple eye test before they have their license renewed.

Instead of having drivers take a short eye test at a DMV office or submit one performed by their physician, individuals would only be required to "self certify" that their vision meets state standards.

County clerks from across the state are strongly opposed to the administrative change.

Cortland County Clerk Elizabeth Larkin said, "It is a sad day for New York when our safety has a price tag on it. For many, the only time they receive an eye test is when they renew their driver license at the DMV. Common sense tells you that the eye exam is needed to drive."

"I am fully in favor of cutting government red tape and enhancing customer service at the local DMV, however, risking public safety under the guise of customer convenience is bad policy and must be reversed," Seward concluded.