



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

## Senate Transportation Committee Approves Diaz Bill S7399

RUBEN DIAZ May 16, 2012

| ISSUE: **HIGHWAYS**

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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### Senate Transportation Committee Approves Diaz Bill S7399

Albany, NY - The New York State Senate Committee on Transportation approved a bill on Tuesday May 15, 2012 introduced by Senator Rubén Díaz (S.7399-Cal.782).

This legislation requires the State Department of Transportation and the State Thruway Authority to submit an annual report to the Governor and Legislature regarding the safety of the state's roadways and to reduce the risk of crashes.

"Last month on the Bronx River Parkway, seven members of the same family were tragically killed when their vehicle flipped over a barrier and landed sixty feet below. This is not the

first accident of this kind on the Bronx River Parkway, and New York State must take every step to address why this has happened. Accidents of this nature must not be allowed to happen again,” stated Senator Diaz.

The bill was introduced on May 9, 2012 as a Uni-Bill and is on the Assembly Transportation Agenda for Wednesday, May 16, 2012.

“I am thankful to Senator Charles Fuschillo, Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee for moving this bill so quickly and responding to the safety concerns of the millions of people who drive on the Bronx River Parkway, the New York State Thruway and its highways” concluded Senator Díaz. This legislation will now go to the full Senate for a vote.

The bill’s Sponsor’s Memo is included.

(Over)

SPONSORS MEMO:

NEW YORK STATE SENATE

INTRODUCER'S MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

submitted in accordance with Senate Rule VI. Sec 1

BILL NUMBER: S7399

SPONSOR: DIAZ

TITLE OF BILL:

An act to amend the transportation law and the public authorities law,  
in relation to the study and examination of the state's roadways and the  
thruway in reducing certain motor vehicle risks

PURPOSE OR GENERAL IDEA OF BILL:

To improve the safety of the state's roadways and reduce the risk of  
crashes.

SUMMARY OF SPECIFIC PROVISIONS:

The bill would direct the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the  
Thruway Authority (Authority), to study and examine the performance of

the state's roadways and the Thruway, respectively, in reducing the departure of motor vehicles from travel lanes and subsequently crashing. The study and examination would be required to include, but not be limited to, high fatality roadway segments and those segments with hazardous features such as steep slopes, embankments, cliffs, drop-offs or deep bodies of water. The bill also would direct DOT and the Authority to each submit annual reports to the governor and the Legislature to include the number and type of travel lane departure crashes, the extent to which DOT or the Authority has analyzed crash data and identified and considered the safety needs of the roadways, and the measures and strategies that have been undertaken, or plan to be undertaken, to improve roadway performance and reduce the risk of travel lane departures and crashes.

EXISTING LAW:

None.

#### JUSTIFICATION:

Motor vehicle crashes take a terrible human toll on people whether they are vehicle passengers, motorcyclists, bicyclists, or pedestrians, depriving individuals of their independence when crashes cause serious physical injury, and depriving families of their loved ones and society of valued members when the crashes are fatal. While there are general downward trends in the number of motor vehicle fatal crashes and the number of fatalities on New York State's roadways, more can and should be done to further prevent them. This bill presents an opportunity to focus on high-risk sections of road across the State such as those with a high number of fatal crashes, and those with hazardous features like steep slopes, embankments, cliffs, drop-offs and deep bodies of water. Strategies for reducing the risk of vehicles abruptly leaving their

lanes of travel and crashing can and should be identified in order to  
reduce the risk of crashes at these high-risk locations to better  
protect the safety of the traveling public and prevent future tragedies.

#### PRIOR LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

New bill.

#### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

Minimal.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE:

This act shall take effect sixty days after it shall have become a law.