



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

Lanza and Cusick Announce Yellow School Bus Bill Signed Into Law by Governor Cuomo

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ALBANY- Senator Lanza and Assemblyman Cusick announced today that their legislation, S.6027/ A.8683 which will bring back yellow school bus service to 7th and 8th grade Staten Island students has been signed into law by Governor Cuomo, Chapter 42 of the laws of 2012.

The bill provides an exemption which will allow the New York City Department of Education to restore busing service for 7th and 8th grade general education students. The Department of Education cited the “Like Circumstances” clause as the main reason for revoking the variance for 7th and 8th grade students in 2009. This legislation removed the “Like Circumstances” barrier from the City Department of Education allowing the Administration to address this important transportation and safety issue for Staten Island school children.

"Its official! School bus service is restored for Staten Island children and their families. I know this is a great relief for parents of school children who have had to worry even more than usual about the safety of their children ever since school bus service had been taken away," said Senator Lanza. "I am grateful to the governor for working with us and signing this bill into law which Assemblyman Cusick and I worked toward passage in our respective houses. With this law, school bus service cannot be unfairly taken away from our children again. Legislation has always been the only sure way to get this permanently accomplished. Once again, I thank Governor Cuomo, Mayor Bloomberg, Assemblyman Cusick, the Staten Island Advance, and the parents and advocates who together have made this victory possible."

"Now that Governor Cuomo has signed the School Bus Restoration bill, the final step of this process is completed," said Assemblyman Cusick. "Parents and students can securely and confidently know that starting the new school year this September, Staten Island 7th and 8th graders will be provided yellow school bus service. It is important for the safety of our children and I am pleased that we were able to work with the New York City Department of Education to restore this necessary service to our children," said Cusick.

The New York City Department of Education typically only provides school bus service to students through sixth grade, however, they had granted variances to seventh and eighth grade students. Over the past 18 years, variances have been granted to 70 schools where the options with respect to public transportation are limited, including seventh and eighth graders. In September of 2009, the New York City Department of Education revoked a variance that allowed 7th and 8th graders to be eligible for yellow school bus service. This decision affected 4,600 general education students at public and non-public schools city-wide. Of those students, 2,940 live on Staten Island where mass-transit options are limited. The Lanza/Cusick law will take these children out of harm's way and give peace of mind to their parents.

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