



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senator Fuschillo Announces Initiative to Suspend Driver Licenses of Tax Delinquents Who Owe More Than \$10,000 in Back Taxes

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August 6, 2013

ISSUE:

- [Income Tax](#)

16,000 Tax Scofflaws Put on Notice

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) recently announced a new initiative to encourage individuals who owe significant back taxes to pay their bills. Under the new program, New York State will suspend a taxpayer's driver's license when their past-due tax liability exceeds \$10,000. The crackdown is the result of legislation enacted in this year's budget.

"Tax scofflaws who don't pay their taxes place are unfairly placing a greater burden on the overwhelming majority hardworking, law-abiding New York taxpayers," said Senator Fuschillo. "They do not deserve the privilege of having a

driver's license if they are not willing to pay their fair share. I commend Governor Cuomo for his leadership in this important matter."

The Tax Department is sending the first round of 16,000 suspension notices to delinquent taxpayers, who have 60 days from the mailing date to arrange payment with the Department. If the taxpayer fails to do so, the Department of Motor Vehicles will send a second letter providing an additional 15 days to respond. If the delinquent taxpayer again fails to arrange payment, the license is suspended until the debt is paid or a payment plan is established.

A taxpayer who drives while the suspension is in effect is subject to arrest and penalties. Aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle in the third degree is a misdemeanor that can carry a fine of between \$200 and \$500, up to 30 days imprisonment, or both such fine and imprisonment. Those with a suspended license can, however, apply for a restricted license, that allows them to drive to work, and return directly home.

The new initiative is estimated to increase State collections by \$26 million this fiscal year and as much as \$6 million annually thereafter.

In New York State, 96% of taxes are paid by businesses and individuals who voluntarily meet their tax responsibilities. The remaining 4% is collected through the Tax Department's audit, collections and criminal investigations programs. Through enforcement programs, such as suspension of driver licenses, the Department ensures fair tax administration for all New Yorkers.