



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

Senator Gianaris, Markey, Crowley Renew Call for Suspended License Driver Crackdown After Another Deadly Crash in Queens

MICHAEL GIANARIS January 30, 2014

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(Maspeth, Queens) In the wake of yet another deadly crash in Queens involving a driver with a suspended license, Senator Michael Gianaris brought together elected officials, community groups and transportation safety advocates to push for swift passage of his legislation cracking down on chronically reckless drivers with suspended licenses. This renewed effort followed the tragic death of Angela Hurtado, who was on her way to play bingo when she was killed by a driver with a suspended license making an illegal turn.

Days after a crash involving a truck driver with a suspended license tragically took the life of an 8 year old in Woodside, Senator Michael Gianaris introduced legislation that would make it a felony for drivers who drive with suspended licenses and kill or seriously injure someone in the process. A second bill would give

law enforcement the authority to immediately impound the license plate of a vehicle being operated by someone with a suspended license.

“Noshat Nahian and Angela Hurtado are only the latest of many victims whose lives have been cut short by drivers who should not have been on the road in the first place,” **said Senator Gianaris**. “These are preventable tragedies. We need to enact these important proposals before any more lives are lost.”

Assemblywoman Marge Markey, who introduced the bills in the State Assembly, said “We need to crack down on drivers who have demonstrated reckless behavior behind the wheel. They have already lost their privilege to drive on our roads and these bills will make it clear they will be punished when they continue to violate the law. Cars and people are a lethal combination. Over the past year we’ve seen the tragic result of speeding on our local streets, accidents caused by those who ignore traffic signals and signs, and hit-and-run drivers. We need to get reckless drivers off the road and Senator Gianaris and I believe this law will help do that.”

“The tragic death of Angela Hurtada shows, once again, the need for stronger laws penalizing those who drive illegally,” **said Councilwoman Liz Crowley**. “Passing common sense legislation like Senator Gianaris’s bill to crack down on unlicensed drivers who endanger others is the first step in protecting all those who share our roads. Dangerous drivers, who never should have been behind the wheel, should not walk away with just a slap on the wrist. My thoughts and prayers go out to Angela Hurtada’s family and friends during this difficult time.”

“Just this past week, one of my constituents from Maspeth was tragically killed on the way to a bingo game when a driver with a suspended license made an illegal left turn and brutally ran her down,” **said Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.**, a co-sponsor of the proposed legislation. “Approving these important bills won’t bring Angela Hurtado back to her loving family, but it may spare others from this kind of unspeakable grief and loss. In our City alone, between 2007 and 2011, 181 men, women and children were killed on our streets by people driving with suspended licenses – motorists who are said to be almost twice as likely as legal drivers to cause fatal accidents. We need to get these irresponsible and highly dangerous drivers out from behind the wheel, and when warranted, behind prison bars.”

Paul Steely-White, Executive Director of Transportation Alternatives, added “Suspended license drivers threaten our kids and kill scores of New Yorkers every year. For deterrence and prevention, this long overdue, common sense legislation must pass the State Senate and Assembly as soon as possible.”

"I am proud to stand with Senator Gianaris and Assemblymember Marge Markey, as they tout legislation making it a felony charge to injure or kill someone while driving with a suspended license. This legislation will be a key link in changing the consciousness of those who contribute to traffic violence. The threat of stiff charges and heavy penalties will help make drivers aware of the tremendous responsibility they have

behind the wheel. Government works when the demands of a community are heard and supported by those we elect to represent us; Senator Gianaris has responded to the Safe Streets community and his leadership will help get killer drivers off our roads," **said Cristina Furlong** of Make Queens Safer.

Several members of Communities of Maspeth and Elmhurst Together (COMET) were also present to voice their support for the legislation.

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