



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Toby Ann Stavisky

## Senator Stavisky Toughens Penalties for Drunk Drivers

TOBY ANN STAVISKY June 18, 2014

| ISSUE: **ALCOHOL**

**Albany, NY**—The New York State Senate yesterday passed S640A, a bill that automatically revokes for six months and then institutes a one-year probationary period on licenses of people convicted of vehicular manslaughter and driving while intoxicated. The bill, introduced by Senator Toby Ann Stavisky (D-Flushing) is an expansion on another drunk driving law the Senator co-sponsored in 2005 popularly known as “VaSean’s Law.”

The 2005 statute was passed in response to the tragic death of VaSean Phillip Alleyne, an 11-year-old boy who was killed by a drunk driver. The driver faced a maximum of only one year in prison because prosecutors could not prove him guilty of any additional traffic infractions.

Under VaSean’s Law, a driver who killed or seriously injured another person because of their intoxication would be guilty of vehicular manslaughter or vehicular assault. The Law also automatically makes those convictions felonies instead of misdemeanors.

“Nearly ten years ago, we lost VaSean in a horrible tragedy that revealed a loophole in our laws that allowed drunk drivers to walk free without paying the price for their crimes. It is in his memory that we expand VaSean’s law to punish drunk drivers by automatically revoking their licenses for 6 months. I thank my Senate colleagues for honoring VaSean’s memory and strengthening this law to keep these negligent and dangerous drivers off our streets,” said Senator Stavisky.

The bill now heads to the Assembly where it is sponsored by Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz.