



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph E. Robach

Useful Government Links

[JOSEPH E. ROBACH](#)

Dear Friend:

Gift cards are an extremely popular holiday present for loved ones, friends, and coworkers. However, before you buy a gift card this holiday season, you need to be aware of your rights under New York State gift card laws.

New York State's gift card laws protect the value of gift cards from being diminished by hidden fees. The laws also require companies to inform consumers if any terms and conditions apply to the gift card, including expiration dates, fees, and whether a replacement card will be issued if the card is lost, stolen, or destroyed.

The Attorney General may impose a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 per offense for companies that break the law, and may order restitution to the consumer. If you believe that a company is violating these laws, you can contact the Attorney General's Regional Offices at 1-800 771-7755.

Sincerely,

Senator Joe Robach

I am pleased to inform you that Governor Spitzer has abandoned his plan to give licenses to illegal aliens because the people of this state abandoned him and overwhelmingly said he was wrong.

His plan was developed in secret, behind closed doors, and without any input from the Legislature, the experts or the people. When he sprung his plan on a surprised public, it triggered an uprising among average citizens and elected officials at the local, state and federal levels.

The Governor's plan would have jeopardized public safety and security. Even the federal Department of Homeland Security opposed the idea of giving drivers licenses to illegal aliens. It would have also created a bureaucratic mess for county clerks who refused to endorse or implement his drivers license plan and would have created an expensive licensing program that would have been a new burden on taxpayers who didn't want it in the first place.

However, despite overwhelming opposition from the people, the Governor ignored them and arrogantly moved ahead with his plan until he caused an uprising among his own party. Only when national politics interceded, only then did he choose to back down.

My colleagues and I in the Senate listened to the people of New York State and we were prepared to stop any effort to allow such an ill-conceived and wrong-headed plan to go forward. We made it clear, during two public hearings and our passage of legislation last month, that we will do all we can to stop his plan and prevent any funding for it.

Still persisting in his arrogance, this morning the Governor chose to blame federal

immigration policy rather than admit that he was trying to force a bad idea on people who clearly did not want it. He still supports the idea of giving drivers licenses to illegal aliens and he cannot be trusted to fully abandon a plan that he pushed with such passion and arrogance.

I want to let you know that I will continue to act to ensure that he does not resurrect a plan that so many people recognized was bad for New York State.

Sincerely,

Joe Robach

SENATE PASSES BILL TO PROHIBIT DRIVERS LICENSES FOR ILLEGAL ALIENS

The New York State Senate today passed legislation that would stop Governor Spitzer's plan to issue drivers licenses to illegal aliens by requiring a social security number or proof of authorized presence in the United States to obtain a New York State drivers license or non-driver identification card.

The legislation (S.6484) the Senate passed today is sponsored by Senator Frank Padavan (Queens). It would require applicants for a drivers license or non-driver identification card to submit a social security number. When a social security number cannot be provided, the applicant must demonstrate they are ineligible to get a number and provide satisfactory proof that the applicant's presence in the United States is authorized under federal law.

SENATE PASSES BRIDGE REFORM LEGISLATION

Measure Ensures Dedicated Funds for Highway and Bridge Construction and Repair

The New York State Senate today passed legislation (S.6516), sponsored by Senator Thomas Libous (R-C-I, Binghamton), Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, to fix the State's Dedicated Highway and Bridge Trust Fund (DHBTF) by directing more funding to bridge and road construction and repair.

The Bridge and Road Investment and Dedicated Fund Guaranteed Enforcement (BRIDGE) Reform

Act will amend the State Finance Law to create a five-year phase-out (approximately 20% per year) of non-bridge and road expenses and prohibit these uses thereafter. The BRIDGE Reform Act aims to clean up the Dedicated Fund by removing DOT Snow and Ice Removal expenses totaling \$563 million and DMV Operational expenses totaling \$199 million so that this money can be used to fix roads and bridges.

“Maintaining the safety and viability of New York’s infrastructure is a critically important investment that needs our attention,” said State Senator Joe Robach. “This legislation will ensure that money dedicated to be used for highway and bridge construction and repairs will not be diverted for other uses -- this will be a true “dedicated” funding source for bridges and highways.”

SENATE PASSES LEGISLATION TO PROTECT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS

Bill Would Allow Victims to Testify Via Closed-Circuit Television

The New York State Senate today passed legislation (S.4875), sponsored by Senator Cathy Young (R-C-I, Olean) that would provide victims of domestic violence greater protection by allowing them to testify in court via closed-circuit television.

Senator Young’s legislation was introduced this April at a Capitol news conference, in observance of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, where members of the Senate Majority were joined by Mrs. New York State 2007 Lori Donaudy of Smithtown, Long Island. A former victim of domestic abuse, Lori’s platform as Mrs. New York includes raising awareness of domestic violence, supporting victims, and raising funds for Joe Torre’s Safe at Home Foundation.

Over two-thirds of domestic violence crimes against women are committed by someone known to them. Very often, vulnerable witnesses are reluctant to testify about crimes that have been committed against them out of fear. Allowing these witnesses to testify via closed-circuit television may help their willingness to come forward and testify.

LINKS: USEFUL ONLINE RESOURCES

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LINKS:

[The White House Homepage](#)

[The United States Senate Homepage](#)

[The United States House of Representatives Homepage](#)

[Department of Homeland Security](#)

[THOMAS: US Congress on the Internet](#)

[FirstGov: The US Government's Official Web Portal to Citizen Resources](#)

[Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

STATE GOVERNMENT LINKS:

[NYS Government Information Locator Service](#)

[NYS Senate Homepage](#)

[Senate Districts By Zip Code](#)

[NYS Legislative Bill Drafting](#)(look up bills and laws)

[Demographic Research & Reapportionment](#)

[New York State Homepage](#)

STATE DEPARTMENTS AND SERVICES:

[New York State Department of Motor Vehicles](#)

[New York State Department of Health](#)

[New York State Department of Education](#)

[New York State Banking Department](#)

[Adelphi Statewide Breast Cancer Hotline and Support Center](#)

[NYS Thruway Authority's EZ-Pass](#)

[New York Council on Problem Gambling](#)

[New York State Canal System](#)

LOCAL (MONROE COUNTY & THE GREATER ROCHESTER REGION) LINKS:

[Monroe County's Official Homepage](#)

[City of Rochester Homepage](#)

[Monroe County Library System](#)

Rochester International Jazz Festival

Rochester Area Entertainment and Events Guide

Genesee Country Museum & Village

Rochester Museum and Science Center

Memorial Art Gallery

George Eastman House

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO)

TOWNS AND VILLAGES:

Chili (Town)

Churchville (Village)

East Rochester (Village)

Fairport (Village)

Henrietta (Town)

[Honeoye Falls \(Village\)](#)

[Irondequoit \(Town\)](#)

[Mendon \(Town\)](#)

[Penfield \(Town\)](#)

[Perinton \(Town\)](#)

[Pittsford \(Town\)](#)

[Pittsford \(Village\)](#)

[Riga \(Town\)](#)

[Rush \(Town\)](#)

[Scottsville \(Village\)](#)

[Wheatland \(Town\)](#)

MISCELLANEOUS LINKS:

[Albany Web Cam](#)

[FindLaw Legal Research](#)

[NY State Senate's Women of Distinction Online Exhibit](#)

[State and Federal Aid for Local Governments](#)