



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

Senator Gallivan Urges Governor to Resolve Dispute with DHS

JIM RANNEY March 5, 2020

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Senator Patrick M. Gallivan, (R-C-I, Elma) is calling on Governor Cuomo to end the ongoing dispute between New York State and the Department of Homeland Security over access to the state's motor vehicle database. The disagreement blocks New Yorkers from participating in the federal government's Trusted Travelers Program.

At issue is implementation of New York's Green Light Law, which allows undocumented immigrants to obtain state driver's licenses. It also prevents the Department of Homeland Security and other border protection agencies from accessing its DMV database. Senator

Gallivan voted against the legislation.

“This puts public safety at risk and makes the job of our law enforcement officers even more difficult,” Senator Gallivan said. “New York should not be blocking access to criminal and DMV records or preventing federal law enforcement agencies from doing their jobs. This dispute also threatens commercial and recreational travel between the U.S. and Canada, which is critical to our region’s economy.”

Earlier this week, Senator Gallivan joined members of the Senate Republican Conference in supporting an amendment to repeal New York’s “Green Light” Law and end the imminent danger the policy poses to public safety. The effort failed, however, when members of the Senate Majority voted against the repeal.

The Department of Homeland Security announced a suspension of New Yorkers’ enrollment eligibility for multiple “Trusted Traveler” programs in direct response to the Green Light Law’s implementation. According to federal officials, the integrity of these popular international travel programs could no longer be guaranteed due to the statewide block on DMV information sharing. According to DHS, about 175,000 New Yorkers would be kicked out of the travelers programs, with no others able to join.

The Green Light Law prevents U.S. Customs and Border Protection and other federal agencies from accessing data used in crucial law enforcement operations, as well as trade, travel, and homeland security matters. Information sharing between New York and the Federal Government had been used to investigate and apprehend hundreds of terrorists, drug traffickers, human traffickers, and financial criminals, among others who pose threats to national security and the public safety of New Yorkers.

