

Department of Motor Vehicles
Fiscal Year 2013-14 Budget Hearing
January 31, 2013
Testimony of Barbara Fiala, Commissioner

Good Morning. Thank you Chairperson DeFrancisco, Chairperson Farrell, Senator Fuschillo, Assemblyman Gantt, and Committee members for having me here today. My name is Barbara Fiala, and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles. I am pleased to have the opportunity to address you and answer any questions you may have regarding the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Fiscal Year 2013-14 Executive Budget as it applies to our agency.

As you know, last week Governor Cuomo outlined his Executive Budget Plan which will build on the progress of the past two years. The Governor provides \$350 million for DMV in his Executive Budget, including funding necessary to introduce initiatives that will transform DMV customer service, resulting in DMV becoming a model for how all agencies will serve the public. Projected revenue collections from all transactions total more than \$1.8 billion. We will perform over 28 million transactions this fiscal year, including more than 4 million internet transactions, including almost 500,000 that will be completed through MyDMV – DMV's personalized web portal. Improving our customer service is important because for many people, DMV represents the face of state government.

Unfortunately, DMV customers often encounter average wait times of over 60 minutes when visiting a State DMV office. They also face limited office hours, extended hold times on calls,

and service delivery methods that are not in step with today's technologically savvy customer. This is simply not acceptable. We must improve our customer service.

At Governor Cuomo's direction, DMV has established a comprehensive set of customer service initiatives that reflect our commitment to place the customer first. DMV's principal objective will be to reduce office wait times in State DMV offices from more than 60 minutes to 30 minutes or less by March 2014. In addition, we will be seeking to achieve 90% customer satisfaction by those who use a State DMV office.

In order to reduce office wait times, we must make more routine transactions available to customers through self-service means. To this end, we will continue to develop customer convenient alternative service methods, including kiosks, additional web transactions, and our popular MyDMV services. Over the next 2 to 3 years, DMV intends to increase the number of "alternative service" transactions from the current 32% to 50%.

Through the expanded use of technology, DMV will provide premier customer service through:

- Call center improvements, including the implementation of new technology will permit efficient call routing so that we can efficiently respond to the 4.2 million calls DMV receives annually. Virtual hold technology will also provide our callers the choice to wait or receive a call back when their call is received by a customer service representative. This new technology will ensure that customers are not waiting on hold for extended periods of time and help DMV to achieve our objective to answer 80% of all calls within 5 minutes, or provide a call back within 15 minutes by March 2014.

- A new queuing system will be installed to provide a “virtual wait experience”, meaning that customers will have the option to go online and make a reservation at a State DMV office and then show up at the scheduled time.
- Establishing convenient office hours in state DMV Offices. DMV will soon pilot expanded hours in three state DMV offices that will include early morning and evening hours. Article VII legislation would enable us to consider the use of Saturday hours in certain state DMV locations. All of these measures are designed to better meet the needs of our customers.
- Improved Office Services, will also include the use of floating Customer Service Representatives or Greeters to answer questions, review paperwork, and direct customers to the most expedient means of service delivery. Soon these mobile representatives will have smart tablets so they can process simple transactions and further improve customer service by streamlining the transaction processing.
- Partnering with private industry to create a Vision Registry that will allow customers the convenience of performing a license renewal transaction online anytime by permitting the mandatory vision test to be performed outside of a DMV office not only by eye care professionals but also at registered pharmacies or downstate AAA offices.

Through the Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee, DMV will continue its outstanding traffic safety initiatives that have made New York’s roadways among the safest in the nation. DMV will receive approximately \$39 million in federal funding. This year’s Article VII legislation is proposed to bring New York into compliance with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration’s requirement to impose sanctions for violation of cell phone and texting laws by

commercial motor vehicle operators. In addition, we will continue activities designed to crackdown on impaired driving, the enforcement of laws against texting and cell phone use, as well as continuing to promote seat belt and car seat usage.

DMV will continue all of these activities while heeding the Governor's call to perform more efficiently and better protect taxpayer money. It remains our core mission to provide quality customer service, promote traffic safety and protect consumers for the benefit of the citizens of New York. Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, we will continue to do so this year while striving to further innovate and improve their delivery. Once again, thank you for this opportunity. I welcome any questions you might have about DMV and our plans for serving the people of New York.