



NEW YORK STATE SENATE DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY

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Senate Majority Protects New York Students And Pedestrians

Legislation Expanding Speed Camera Usage in New York City School Zones & Implementing Pilot Program in Buffalo Passes Under Senate Democratic Majority

(Albany, NY) The Senate Democratic Majority today passed legislation ([S.4331](#)) that will save lives by increasing protection of New York City school zones through expanded speed camera utilization. The school zone speed camera program was allowed to lapse under the former Senate Republican Majority. Additionally, the Senate Majority passed legislation ([S.231](#)) that will create a demonstration speed camera program for the City of Buffalo.

“Ensuring students and pedestrians are protected in school zones is common sense,” **Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins** said. “Speed cameras have been proven to prevent tragedies and save lives. Together with our partners in the Assembly, we will help ensure students are better protected by expanding speed camera usage to more school zones and implementing a demonstration program in Buffalo. I applaud Senator Gounardes and Senator Kennedy for their leadership on this critical issue.”

The [legislation](#) passed by the Senate Majority for New York City speed cameras:

- Expands the use of speed cameras to 750 schools zones within the City of New York weekdays between 6:00 AM - 10:00 PM.
 - The currently expired law authorized 140 speed cameras in school zones.
- Mandates the City of New York to install signage notifying drivers that speed camera enforcement is used.
- Defines a “school speed zone” as being a radial distance not to exceed one thousand three hundred twenty feet from a school building, entrance or exit.

Bill Sponsor, Senator Andrew Gounardes said, “No parent, senior, or pedestrian of any age should live in fear of crossing the street because of speeding traffic. This program slows traffic and saves lives. Plain and simple. The numbers are indisputable and speak for themselves: 63% reduction in speeding traffic and 14% in traffic injuries. We know that speed is determinant of the severity of an injury received in a crash. I’ll never apologize for prioritizing the safety of millions of pedestrians over the issuance of tickets to reckless drivers.”

The [legislation](#) passed by the Senate Majority for the City of Buffalo demonstration speed camera program:

- Authorizes the City of Buffalo to establish a demonstration program imposing monetary liability on the owners of motor vehicles found to be exceeding the maximum school speed limit in Buffalo through the use of a speed limit photo device.
- Authorizes the City of Buffalo to operate cameras in no more than 20 school zones at any one time during any year of the program.

Bill Sponsor and Chair of the Senate Transportation Chair, Senator Tim Kennedy, said, “Simply put, speed cameras in New York City have saved lives. Protecting our kids while they're at school is of paramount importance and drivers in school zones should know that driving safely is critical - it's why we need to not only protect and expand the program in New York City, but extend it to other cities in New York as well, including the City of Buffalo. I was proud to move this legislation forward through my committee and I look forward to voting this much-needed bill into law.”

Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris said, “Speed cameras save lives, plain and simple. Too many young people have been lost due to reckless drivers and these cameras help keep our streets safe. The New New York Senate is fighting to ensure we preserve this vital program for the City of New York.”

Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. said, “I am proud to co-sponsor this piece of legislation that will help set up additional photo speed violation monitoring systems for school speed zones throughout the city. As the father of two school-aged girls who must cross the street to get to their bus and school, I know the concerns parents have when it comes to speeding cars. Ensuring the safety of children as they go to and leave their schools is one of the most important things we can do as elected officials.”

Senator Jamaal Bailey said, “As the father of two young daughters that will be starting school soon, public safety in school zones is of high priority for me. Every parent should feel at ease that their children are safe from drivers that are speeding. I want to thank Senator Gounardes for his leadership on this legislation. Having expanded use of speed cameras in school zones is necessary and common sense legislation.”

Senator Alessandra Biaggi said, “This is another example of how elections make a difference. It's hard to understand how ensuring our children are safe when they enter and leave school ever became a political issue. But now a real Democratic majority can pass this common sense safety measure--speed cameras near schools.”

Senator David Carlucci said, “Speed safety cameras reduced speeding by more than 63 percent in school zones, according to a report from the New York City DOT, and we know speeding is a leading factor in deadly car crashes. This legislation makes sense to support because having more cameras operating past school hours will ensure children and all pedestrians are safer.”

Senator Leroy Comrie said, “Speeders put pedestrians, especially children walking to and from school, at tremendous risk for injury or death. S.4331 will allow New York City to expand on its successes in improving street safety by including more school zones and critical corridors in its speed camera program. I stand with Leader Stewart-Cousins, Senator Gounardes, and my Senate colleagues committed to providing safer environments for our children in and around their schools.”

Senator Brad Hoylman said, “There are just 140 speed cameras in all five boroughs across New York City. As a public school parent myself, this is unacceptable. How many reckless drivers continually speed by our schools, unaccounted for, putting the safety of pedestrians and children at risk? I'm equal parts proud and relieved to co-sponsor Senator Gounardes' bill with Assemblymember Glick to dramatically expand New York City's speed camera program to a total of 750 cameras. Lives are at stake all across our City, and today we're taking the steps to save them. I'm proud to be a member of a Conference that puts the safety of children first. New York is a safer place as a result.”

Senator Liz Krueger said, “When parents send their kids off to school, they shouldn't have to worry about whether or not they'll get there safely. We know that speeding cars are a leading cause of death for kids in New York City. We also know that speed cameras significantly reduce speeding in the areas where they are deployed. This legislation will give New York City the tools it needs to save lives.”

Senator Kevin Parker said, “I am proud to support Senator Gounardes Bill 4331, which will call for the expansion of speed cameras in New York City School zones. School safety cameras not only make drivers more cautious, but it brings a sense of comfort and safety to parents and school staff.”

Senator Jessica Ramos said, “In my district runs Northern Boulevard, one of the most dangerous highways. Over 12 thousand children go to school on Northern Boulevard, and we have lost 6 children since 2012 due to car crashes near our schools. As a mother, and as a neighbor and community member to the parents in my district, I know the dire need for speed cameras in school zones. I am voting yes today to expand speed cameras in school zones for the sake of our children's safety.”

Senator Gustavo Rivera said, “By extending the speed safety camera program in large cities across our State until 2022 we will ensure the safety and well-being of the millions of New Yorkers using our streets daily especially those of our schoolchildren. For instance, speed cameras have helped reduce speeding on major thoroughfares such as the Grand Concourse in my district, signaling that we must continue to pursue its implementation to safeguard the lives of as many pedestrians and drivers across New York State as possible.”

Senator Julia Salazar said, “Our children are our future, and this policy is long overdue. Creating accountability around school zones is simple common sense, and our city and state need to start taking human life more seriously than the convenience of drivers.”

Senator James Sanders Jr. said, “We have an obligation to protect our children in every way we can, particularly in school zones. I wholeheartedly support the addition of speed cameras as a method of accident prevention in these critical areas where large groups of youth gather. When used, these devices have proven to reduce traffic collisions. Under those conditions, I am proud to stand with the school safety advocates and my colleagues in government to support the installation of speed cameras in additional school zones across New York.”

Senator Diane Savino said, “We see it every day in New York City, people speeding by during rush hour and putting the lives of students and those who drop them off at risk. Slowing down on the roads is proven to save lives. By increasing the amount of speed cameras, we hope this deterrent will ensure the safety of families across New York City.”

Senator Toby Ann Stavisky said, “Too often, we witness accidents that could have prevented. Schools and their surrounding areas should be a safe haven for everyone--educators, parents and especially students. By expanding speed camera utilization, it will offer increased protection for all pedestrians. I commend the activists who have worked so hard to promote safety.”

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said, “This is a huge victory for safe streets. We applaud the Assembly and the Senate for helping us tackle avoidable tragedies on our streets by dramatically expanding our speed camera program. This is another key tool that we will use to aggressively pursue Vision Zero and to save lives across the city.”

Buffalo Mayor Byron W. Brown said, “Speed safety cameras near schools make sense and I commend Senator Tim Kennedy, Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes and both the State Senate and Assembly for working together to pass this life-saving legislation. We must continue to do everything we can to calm traffic in school zones. This tool serves to remind all motorists to slow down, obey traffic laws and keep our children safe.”

New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson said, “School zone speed cameras save lives, period. Today is a big step forward in the fight for safer streets and the fight to protect our children from traffic violence. I applaud my colleagues in Albany for taking action to protect our students and I look forward to continuing to work together to make City streets safer.”

New York City Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg said, “We thank the Senate and Assembly for their incredible leadership today, passing what is now the nation’s strongest speed-camera law. We know speed cameras were a central part of the encouraging results we have had in New York City under Vision Zero, where fatalities have declined for five straight years, bucking national trends.”

Marco Connor, Interim Director of Transportation Alternatives, said, “After years of making the case for covering more school zones with this life-saving technology, we're proud to stand with Assembly Member Glick and State Senator Gounardes, who have been unwavering in their support for safer streets on behalf of all New Yorkers. Given the efficacy of the original 140-camera program, which we can say without reservation has saved lives and prevented injuries on our streets, we have no doubt that this expansion will lead to a safer walk to school for many more children in the five boroughs. This is a watershed moment for New York City that will lead to safer streets and neighborhoods during what is now the most dangerous times of day. We look forward to standing with Governor Cuomo to see this truly historic legislation signed into law.”

Amy Cohen, Founding Member of Families For Safe Streets, said, “We have been fighting for years to protect more New Yorkers from reckless drivers, so we're pleased to finally see this new state legislature approve a dramatic expansion of the life-saving speed safety camera program. As we know all too well, speeding is a deadly act and has to stop. We have an epidemic and speed safety cameras are a huge part of the cure. We're grateful to Senator Gounardes and Assembly Member Glick for taking up this cause and being champions for safer streets.”

Eric McClure, Executive Director of StreetsPAC, said, “Andrew Gounardes ran for the State Senate on a platform that put protecting pedestrians at the very top of the list, and he’s wasted no time as a Senator translating those words into action. The speed safety camera bill that he sponsored, and that will pass both houses of the legislature today, will save lives and protect the wellbeing of New Yorkers – and especially, our kids. We’re grateful to Senator Gounardes and his colleagues in the Senate and Assembly for acting swiftly to get this critical legislation passed.”

New York State AARP Director Beth Finkel said, “Safe streets benefit residents of all ages, and speed cameras are a proven deterrent to dangerous driving. AARP thanks Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, Speaker Heastie and the Legislature for this strong step toward making New York City a safer place for our members and all New Yorkers. With residents 65 and over accounting for [half](#) of all city traffic fatalities in 2017 despite making up only about a seventh of the city’s population, it’s time for action. We hope the Governor signs this bill into law.”

Andy Pallotta, President of New York State United Teachers, said, “The statistics are clear: Reducing speeds saves lives. This legislation will help promote a safer school environment for children, educators and all community members.”

Michael Mulgrew, President of the United Federation of Teachers, said, “Our students, our staff, our school neighborhoods will be safer because of this legislation. This is an example of what government can do when all the stakeholders - educators, parents, advocates, public officials - come together.”

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