

Senator Pam Helming

Representing the 54th New York Senate District



IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 17, 2019

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A Statement from Senator Pam Helming On the Passage of the Greenlight Bill

“The passage of so-called ‘Greenlight’ legislation giving illegal immigrants the right to obtain a New York State driver’s license will not make our roads safer, our communities stronger, or provide any benefits to those who choose to follow the law and come to this country legally. This is about much more than driving. It is an immunity license for those living here illegally. If a person living here illegally can get all of the benefits of being a citizen, why follow the law and go through the legal process toward naturalization? This bill opens the door to allowing non-citizens to vote, adds more unfunded mandates to counties, and forces local county clerks to try and verify foreign documents they do not have the training or staff expertise to interpret. The law enforcement community has also raised significant concerns regarding the restriction of their access to DMV applications by non-citizens. Two-thirds of states do not allow illegal immigrants to obtain a driver’s license, and the dozen that do have tight restrictions. New York’s proposal is far more sweeping and far more radical than any other state in the nation.

“We should be listening to our county clerks, sheriffs, and district attorneys. America is a nation of immigrants, and we embrace this history. However, we are also a nation of laws, and this is a matter of both fairness and public safety. This bill is yet another New York City-driven progressive overreach that defies common sense. Siena College has done several polls on this issue, and voters have been clear that they do not support this proposal. Additionally, I conducted my annual legislative survey earlier this year, and more than 80 percent of those who responded opposed the plan. This is not a Democrat or Republican issue. In fact, 19 Assembly Democrats voted against the bill because they too understand that we should not be rewarding those who choose to break the immigration laws of our county. The passage of this measure in the Senate today is just one more example of politics trampling common sense.”

Senator Helming represents the 54th Senate District, which consists of Seneca and Wayne Counties, parts of Cayuga and Ontario Counties, and the towns of Lansing and Webster. For more information, please visit Senator Helming’s [website](#), or follow @SenatorHelming on Facebook or Twitter.

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