



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
STATEN ISLAND, NY

**MAYOR DE BLASIO: CHILDREN AT RISK AS 120 SCHOOL SPEED ZONES CEASE
ISSUING VIOLATIONS DUE TO STATE SENATE INACTION**

Because of State Senate inaction to re-authorize law, cameras at 120 out of 140 school speed zones will cease issuing violations at 5:30 PM today; 20 locations – half of DOT mobile camera units – will remain operational until the end of summer school

STATEN ISLAND—Mayor Bill de Blasio announced that because the New York State Senate failed to preserve and expand speed cameras near schools, 120 school zones with speed cameras will no longer issue violations starting today at 5:30 PM. 20 school zones will still have speed cameras and issue violations until the end of August. The Administration can move these locations daily to maximize safety near schools across the five boroughs.

The City will continue to call on the State Senate to come back to Albany to pass S6046/A7798-C, legislation that would preserve and expand speed cameras near schools. The legislation has passed the Assembly and currently has 34 co-sponsors in the State Senate where only 32 votes are needed to pass any given bill.

“The State Senate has shown a complete disregard for the safety of our kids by not preserving and expanding speed cameras near schools. We still have the authority to use speed cameras near 20 school zones – and we can change those locations daily,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “Let this be a warning to drivers that the State Senate’s inability to act is no license to travel at unsafe speeds. While we’ll still do all we can to keep our kids safe, the fact still remains that the State Senate must return to Albany to preserve and expand these life-saving cameras. Our children’s lives depend on it.”

“After standing alongside advocates who went countless times to Albany to tirelessly fight for speed cameras, we mark this occasion today with true sadness,” said **Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. “After four and half years of Vision Zero, New York City has seen roadway fatalities dramatically decline, bucking the national trend of increased fatalities. We know speed cameras save lives; indeed, the amazing DOT Traffic Operations team – who deserve the City’s thanks for so expertly overseeing the camera program – want to get back to their life-saving work. To do that, the State Senate needs to get back to work.”

This afternoon, Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg joined DOT staff members at a Long Island City garage where the mobile camera unit returned their vehicles. The City currently has 40 mobile cameras, half of which will no longer be in service.

New York City's speed cameras have been remarkably effective, showing a 63 percent decline in speeding violations issued at a typical school zone camera location from 2014 to 2016. [A report on the program issued by DOT](#) shows that between 2014-2016, 81 percent of vehicle owners who received a violation for speeding within school zones did not receive an additional violation. Pedestrian, motorist and cyclist injuries in traffic crashes have declined by an average of 17 percent annually at camera locations – and traffic fatalities have declined by 55 percent.

The State Assembly has previously passed legislation (S6046/A 7798-C) that would preserve and expand speed cameras near schools. The legislation is sponsored by Assembly Member Deborah Glick and State Senator Jose Peralta. S6046/A 7798-C currently has 34 co-sponsors in the State Senate where only 32 votes are needed to pass any given bill. This legislation would do the following:

- Re-authorize the current 140 camera locations, and authorize the City to install speed cameras at an additional 150 school speed zones.
- Revise the definition of a school zone to allow DOT to address speeding on streets that are near a school, as opposed to only the street or streets on which a school is located.
- Extend the program until 2022

In 2013, the State Legislature and Governor Cuomo enacted Sec. 1180-b of New York State's Vehicle and Traffic Law (VTL), which granted New York City the authority to pilot an automated speed enforcement program to deter speeding in 20 school speed zones. That law sunsets on August 30, 2018. In June 2014, the legislature amended the law, expanding the program to a total of 140 school speed zones, in order to support the pursuit of the City's Vision Zero goal of eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries. That amendment sunsets today.

“Speed cameras monitoring dozens of intersections throughout New York City are going to be turned off today because of Senate Republican inaction. Speed cameras save lives, especially those of young children. It is shameful that the Senate Republicans refused to re-authorize this life-saving program and have refused to return to Albany to take action. New Yorkers deserve real leadership, and they are being failed by the Senate Republican Majority,” said **State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senate Democratic Leader.**

“The school zone speed camera program saved countless lives, and because of inaction from the Senate Republican Majority to vote on my bill to renew and expand the initiative, the cameras will be turned off this evening. This is completely illogical. This program has been tremendously successful. This is a sad day for our city, for our kids and for all New Yorkers. Tomorrow, New York City kids will no longer be protected from reckless drivers when they travel to and from summer school, and in September, more than one million children will return to school on more dangerous roads, this is unacceptable,” said **State Senator Jose Peralta.**

"Today is a sad day for New York: rather than do their jobs, Senate Republicans continue to play politics with our children's safety by allowing the school zone speed camera program to lapse, said **State Senator Michael Gianaris, Chair of the Democratic Conference.**" As these cameras go dark, families will wonder if their children will be the next victims of reckless drivers. This failed leadership shows why a Democratic majority is more necessary than ever."

"The continuation of the school zone speed camera program has been my top priority for 2 years. While our original bill called for a major expansion of the number of cameras, the bill that passed the Assembly and is live in the Senate represents the result of negotiations with Republican Senators opposed to the cameras. It is galling that no matter how many changes we made to accommodate the Senate, they still refuse to protect New York City school children," said **Assembly Member Deborah Glick.**

"It is unconscionable that we will continue to experience a preventable loss of life in our city due to the failure and inaction of the Republican controlled NYS Senate. Legislation to reauthorize speed cameras in school zones are critical to ensure our children are protected. I was proud to vote for this measure when it came to the floor of the NYS Assembly and hope the senate will go back into session and do the right thing for the children of New York," said **Assembly Member Carmen De La Rosa.**

"The State Senate must return to Albany to take up this important legislation that will allow our City to continue to protect children, seniors, and everyone else sharing our streets. To fail in this obligation is unthinkable, and this fight is nowhere close to over. Today, I stand with Mayor de Blasio, transportation advocates, teachers and parents to demand that these elected representatives of the people do their jobs," said **Council Member Margaret Chin.**

"Too many New Yorkers lose their lives every year to reckless drivers. Speed cameras are a simple and effective way to bring some safety to our streets, and providing backup to our police officers in holding offenders accountable. It is critical that the State Senate convene to vote on this much-needed legislation to help keep the residents of this city safe from dangerous drivers," said **Council Member Robert Cornegy.**

"The New York State Senate should immediately reconvene and extend the School Zone Speed Camera program," said **Council Member Daniel Dromm.** "As a former NYC public school teacher who has seen a student hit by a car, I am dismayed that this life saving program is ending due to Albany's dysfunction. I stand with Mayor de Blasio in calling on the Republican controlled State Senate majority to take action and protect our children from harm."

"It is unconscionable that Albany has allowed New York City's speed camera program to lapse. The Senate must return to session to reinstate speed cameras and protect the lives of thousands of New York City schools students. While I know our police officers and traffic enforcement agents will continue doing all they can to keep our streets safe, it is beyond frustrating that politics, bureaucracy, and summer vacations are standing in the way of this city's ability to use our own enforcement technology. We are better than this and we must do better," said **Council Member Vanessa Gibson.**

"According to the Department of Transportation since 2009 there have been 1,973 deaths and 409,970 injuries from traffic collisions in our City," said Council Member Ben Kallos. "New Yorkers are dying and being injured too often from traffic collisions that could be prevented with decades-old technology that has already saved countless lives. We not only need 140 traffic cameras to protect our schools, but we need many more to protect those who visit, work, and live in our city," said **Council Member Ben Kallos**.

"Our families deserve to be able to walk around this city and feel safe when they cross the street. Speed cameras are a vital part of our city's commitment to Vision Zero, and Majority Leader Flanagan and his Republican colleagues in the state Senate are jeopardizing the lives of New Yorkers every day they fail to return to Albany and renew and expand the city's speed camera program. New Yorkers won't stand for business as usual any longer and will take to task any official who puts children in harm's way," said **Council Member Carlina Rivera**.

"Until the State Senate acts to extend the speed camera program, it is failing in its responsibility to serve the people of New York City. The State Senate must reconvene to protect our children and other pedestrians crossing the street near city schools by extending this lifesaving program. It is deeply troubling that politics is getting in the way of common sense pedestrian safety," said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**.

"The school zone speed camera program is a proven measure that reduces traffic violence, helps keep our streets safe, and protects our city's children, seniors, and families. But as of 5:30 p.m. today, 85% of these cameras will be deactivated, and the rest could be turned off by the end of the summer, jeopardizing the health and safety of New Yorkers. I urge the State Senate to help us continue preventing injuries and saving lives by reconvening and passing the legislation to extend and expand this critical program," said **Council Member Mark Treyger**.

"If the Senate fails to act to continue the speed camera program, children could die. Speed cameras save lives. We need to keep them so not one more child loses their life," said **Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer**.

"Passing a bill to renew and expand the City's proven and popular speed safety camera program should have been a routine procedure," said **Amy Cohen, a founding member of Families for Safe Streets**. "Protecting children shouldn't be considered controversial. But Senate Republicans decided to make it controversial, and now children are going to die because of that decision."

"With their decision to block the Senate from voting its conscience on the bill to renew and expand the City's speed safety camera program, the Senate's Republican leaders have effectively legalized speeding near schools," said **Paul Steely White, Executive Director of Transportation Alternatives**. "Over 160,000 students are attending summer school right now, and come September, there will be more than one million students headed to New York City schools each day. I pray for the safety of these children, because thanks to Senator Flanagan and his Republican colleagues, our prayers are all we have left to protect them from speeding drivers."

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