



News From

## Assemblyman Robert K. Sweeney

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### Assemblyman Sweeney Lights the Way

In an effort to better protect ambulance and other emergency service responders attending to roadside incidents, Assemblyman Bob Sweeney (D-Lindenhurst) announced today that legislation he sponsored, allowing emergency vehicles the option to use rear projecting blue lights, has been signed into law. The measure (A.7919/Sweeney - S.5483/Martins) expands on current law that allows blue lights to be affixed to a fire or police vehicle for rear projection, with red or combination red and white lights.

“Fire and police vehicles are already allowed to add a blue light to their alert systems, increasing their visibility while attending to emergencies on the side of the road,” said Sweeney. “This bill would give the option for ambulances to also be equipped with rear-facing blue lights, which would greatly increase the safety for ambulance workers on roads and highways.”

The President of the Firemen’s Association of the State of New York, David Jacobowitz, called this legislation "a final step in a long process for improving highway incident safety, which brings volunteer ambulance vehicles to the same level of recognition and driver perception as that enjoyed by police vehicles and volunteer fire apparatus". Jacobowitz cited Assemblyman Sweeney's bill as "something long sought after by the volunteer ambulance community and a process which makes highway incident scenes a safer situation for all drivers".

“We appreciate the support shown by the legislature with the swift passage of this important legislation,” said New York State Volunteer Ambulance and Rescue Association President Michael J. Mastrianni, Jr. “This legislation will help improve the visibility of emergency medical vehicles and help enhance the safety for EMS personnel while operating at roadway incidents.”

“When responding to roadside emergencies, our ambulance and emergency personnel face a significant risk of being struck by passing motorists,” said Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver (D-Manhattan). “By allowing for the addition of blue lights to the back of ambulances and emergency services vehicles, this legislation will help protect the men and women who we depend on for roadside emergencies.”

Studies have found that the perception-decision-response process in drivers, particularly at night, favored the blue light over other colors when approaching from the rear of the vehicle. These lights were allowed to be mounted on police and fire vehicles in 2010.

The bill was signed Chapter 143 of the Laws of 2011.

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