

Department of Motor Vehicles
Fiscal Year 2017-18 Budget Hearing
February 15, 2017

Testimony of Theresa Egan, Executive Deputy Commissioner

Good Morning. Thank you Chairperson Young, Chairperson Farrell, Chairperson Robach, Chairperson Gantt, and other members of the Legislature for inviting me here today. I am Terri Egan, the Executive Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Governor Cuomo's executive budget plan allows DMV to continue to build upon the innovations and efficiencies achieved over the past few years. The budget provides \$342 million for DMV to support its main office in Albany, 27 State operated offices, and 102 county operated offices, and will enable us to continue our efforts to improve overall customer service, promote traffic safety, and protect consumers.

DMV will use a \$16 million increase over the prior year's funding and 107 new FTEs to accommodate additional in-office customers as a result of increasing license renewal volumes, to ensure that New York State is compliant with the Real ID Act, and to oversee the safe expansion of ridesharing services to upstate New York. Our average wait times in the State offices remain under 30 minutes, and these additional funds and FTEs will allow us to at minimum maintain this critical level of customer service.

No later than October 1, 2020, domestic air travelers will need a REAL ID compliant document or other acceptable form of Federal identification in order to avoid secondary screening. It is estimated that approximately 11 million New Yorkers would seek a Real ID compliant driver license or non-driver ID, which can only be obtained in an office. Due to the law's increased identity verification and documentation requirements, issuing a Real ID compliant document is a more time consuming transaction, requiring that our employees be well trained so that they can adequately perform the necessary review. The \$5.00 fee

would cover the additional DMV personnel and IT resources needed to serve customers seeking these documents beginning in the fall of 2017. This year, we enter into the peak license renewal volume period and we want to leverage this period so New Yorkers are prepared when the Act is fully implemented in 2020. Any delay in implementation will necessitate customers to make repeat visits to our offices, resulting in inconvenience to our customers and in increased costs to the State.

With continued enhancements to our website, DMV constantly seeks to improve the services we offer to our customers. DMV's new, modern, dynamic, and easy to use website is optimized for use on mobile devices. Our website now receives more than 35 million visits per year and offers more than 50 online transactions and services. In 2016, customers performed more than 7.3 million internet transactions totaling nearly \$500 million. Millions more accessed our website to gather information or check the status of their title or license, among other free services. In addition, last year more than 600,000 New Yorkers registered to vote through the DMV website.

Along with the expanded use of the website, we are fully embracing new technologies such as electronic notifications that allow us to reduce our environmental footprint and decrease printing and mailing costs. Currently more than 3.5 million New Yorkers are enrolled in our electronic registration renewal and inspection reminders program, saving the state more than \$500 thousand annually.

In total, these improvements have helped us to move closer to achieving a long term goal of 50 percent of transactions being completed using alternative service channels, including the web, mail and kiosks. Currently, more than 47 percent of our transactions are completed through an alternative service channel.

The 2017-18 Executive Budget also looks to provide ridesharing outside of New York City by establishing a uniform statewide regulatory framework that will be overseen by the Department of Motor Vehicles. By expanding ridesharing outside of NYC, we will be able to provide economic opportunity to more people as well as to provide a cost effective transportation alternative. DMV will provide licensing and oversight of rideshare companies, including broad auditing powers to ensure uniformity in access for all New Yorkers and compliance with all laws, rules and regulations.

DMV is not only focused on improving service to our customers, we also continue to expand partnerships with other agencies to create efficiencies and increase compliance. In 2016, DMV investigators conducted sweeps that resulted in the seizure of 862 fraudulent licenses and the arrest of 818 individuals for underage drinking, both single year records. Through the year-round Operation Prevent initiative, DMV investigators work with the State Liquor Authority, state and local law enforcement agencies to conduct underage drinking and fake ID sweeps at bars, restaurants and concert venues across New York.

Partnering with 14 state agencies through the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee, DMV will continue its outstanding work that has made New York's roadways among the safest in the nation. GTSC distributes in excess of \$30 million in federal funding annually to support traffic safety initiatives including enforcement efforts by State and local law enforcement agencies to combat impaired driving and distracted driving as well as other dangerous driving behaviors.

In 2016, seat belt usage remained at an all-time high of 92 percent and New York State has become a national leader in an innovative program aimed at detecting drugged driving by training and certifying Drug Recognition Experts across the state. As a result of these efforts and many others, fatality rates continue to drop. Preliminary statistics show a decrease in fatalities from 2015 to 2016 of 7 percent; while the national trends show a significant increase.

To support our ongoing traffic safety efforts, this year's budget includes proposals to clarify the definition of a "drug", expand the scope of the written test for purposes of bicycle and pedestrian safety, require the revocation of a license for driving while impaired by drugs, increase license sanctions for refusing to submit to a chemical test, prohibit the use of mobile telephones and portable electronic devices when a vehicle is not in motion and by persons under 18, and to require all passengers in a motor vehicle to wear a seat belt. All of these measures will result in safer roads for traveling New Yorkers and serve to prevent injury and loss of life.

Looking forward, DMV will continue its commitment to improve traffic safety, protect consumers, innovate and improve our procedures, maintain a high level of customer service, and provide convenient options for our customers to complete transactions. We remain strongly committed to our core mission to serve the citizens of New York.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today. I welcome any questions you might have about DMV and our plans for serving the people of New York.