

Department of Motor
Vehicles Fiscal Year
2019-20 Budget
Hearing January 30,
2019

Testimony of Theresa Egan, Executive Deputy
Commissioner

Good Morning. Thank you, Chairperson Krueger, Chairperson Weinstein, Chairperson Kennedy, Chairperson Magnarelli, 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 provides \$396 million for DMV to support its central office in Albany, 27 State operated offices, and 102 county operated offices, and it will enable us to continue our efforts to improve overall customer service, protect consumers and promote traffic safety.

DMV will use the \$33 million increase over last

year's funding to accommodate more in-office customer visits resulting from growing license renewal volumes and our continued implementation of the Federal REAL ID Act, as well as to manage additional federal mandates when testing for Commercial Driver Licenses.

Our average wait time in the State offices remains under 30 minutes, and the additional funding will allow us to, at minimum, maintain this critical level of customer service.

With regard to the Federal REAL ID Act, DMV started issuing a standalone REAL ID compliant document on October 30, 2017 and since that time, we have issued over 1.3 million REAL ID compliant licenses and ID cards.

We also continue to improve our website and our mobile phone user experience making it easier for customers to obtain information and complete transactions online, when and where it is most convenient for them. Our website now receives more

than 38 million visits per year and offers more than 60 online transactions and services. In 2018, customers performed more than 9.6 million internet transactions totaling nearly \$593 million. Moreover, our electronic reminder program which provides email and text reminders to millions of New Yorkers each year, has saved the state nearly \$1 million in postage annually through the elimination of mailed reminders.

In addition, DMV has developed an interactive online Document Guide to help customers determine what documents they need to bring when applying for a new driver license, permit, or non-driver ID card. This is also helpful for customers wanting to change their current document to an Enhanced or Federal REAL ID. Since the rollout of the New York State REAL ID, more than 2.1 million customers have used the guide to prepare for their visit to the DMV. In order to be prepared with the documents necessary to obtain a REAL ID, I highly encourage people to use the Document Guide before coming into a DMV

office.

These initiatives are just some of many underway that will modernize and streamline the way DMV serves its customers. As part of this approach, DMV has initiated a multi-year system modernization effort that will ultimately see all of DMV's major computer systems replaced with state of the art technology. Already this year, we have updated the workstations, testing stations, and credit card devices in our state and county offices; increased network capacity and scanning capabilities; and improved the accessibility of our website for people with disabilities - all in an effort to improve performance and create a better experience for our customers.

Partnering with several 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 more than \$33 million in federal funding annually to support traffic safety initiatives

including enforcement efforts by State and local law enforcement agencies to combat impaired driving, distracted driving as well as other dangerous driving behaviors.

In 2018, seat belt usage remained at an all-time high; while efforts to improve safety for younger drivers, child passengers, motorcyclists, and pedestrians have made a positive impact as well. New York State continues to lead the way in adopting legislation and promoting education for all New Yorkers that will make the roads safer.

As a result of these efforts and many others, fatality rates continue to drop in New York. Preliminary statistics show a continued decrease in fatalities from 2017 to 2018. New York is seeing these reductions while the national trends show a significant increase.

This year's budget proposal includes legislation

to further strengthen the safety requirements for certain vehicles. The proposal includes: a ban on registration of remanufactured stretch limousines; a requirement for drivers to hold a commercial driver license with a passenger endorsement in operating a vehicle for-hire with 8 or more passengers; explicit authorization for DMV and others to seize suspended license plates; increased penalties for those who tamper with DOT out of service stickers; new requirements for public inspection stations to report to DMV if a remanufactured stretch limousine attempts to get an inspection; a prohibition on U-turns for for-hire vehicles and large vehicles, among other things.

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.