



Testimony on the FY 2026 Executive Budget Proposal Transportation

The Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) proudly represents thousands of employees across the Department of Transportation (DOT), Thruway Authority, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), local highway departments, departments of public works, and public transit systems. These dedicated professionals maintain our state's infrastructure, ensure the safety of the drivers and vehicles on our roads, and keep New Yorkers moving.

The Dangers Faced by Our Workers

Every day, these employees put their lives on the line. Tragically, in 2024, two State Thruway Authority employees, including CSEA member Stephen Ebling, were struck and killed on the job. In another harrowing incident caught on a dashboard camera, a CSEA-represented DOT employee was nearly killed when a box truck failed to move over for a maintenance crew¹. These cases underscore the ever-present risks faced by highway workers who are just trying to do their jobs.

But the dangers extend beyond the road. DMV employees, who many assume work in relatively safe environments, are also exposed to serious risks. A joint survey conducted by the DMV and CSEA found that over **50% of motor vehicle license examiners** reported experiencing workplace violence, including instances of **kidnapping, assault, and violent threats**. When an individual fails a driving exam, frustration and anger are too often taken out on the examiner sitting beside them. Despite ongoing efforts to mitigate these threats, DMV employees continue to endure dangerous workplace conditions.

Legislative Solutions in the FY2026 Budget

CSEA strongly supports proposals included in the FY2026 executive budget to enhance transportation worker safety. In addition to these proposals, we support measures to further strengthen these protections:

TEDE Part Q – Strengthening the Work Zone Speed Camera Program

This proposal would make the work zone speed camera program **permanent, expand** it to the New York State Bridge Authority and Triborough Bridge & Tunnel Authority, and **increase penalties** for repeat offenders. These cameras save lives. Highway workers overwhelmingly agree: **when a camera is present, drivers slow down.**

¹ Scan the QR code to view a NYS DOT dashcam video of this incident.



To further protect our workers, CSEA urges enhancements to this legislation, including:

- **Doubling the number of authorized work zone speed cameras** from 20 to 40 for DOT and from 10 to 20 for the Thruway Authority.
- **Suspending registrations** of any vehicle that receives **four or more** work zone speeding violations within 18 months.
- **Increasing penalties** for speeding in non-camera work zones and for failing to move over when legally required.

TEDE Part R – Increasing Penalties for Assaulting Public Workers

This proposal would **elevate the penalty for assaulting a highway worker, DMV license examiner, or DMV representative** from a **Class A misdemeanor to a Class D felony**.

These workers serve the public, often in situations where tensions run high—whether it’s an individual who just failed a driving test, a driver upset over a suspended license, or motorists frustrated by construction-related delays. While frustration is understandable, **violence is never acceptable**. This legislation sends a clear message: **if you assault one of these employees, there will be serious consequences**.

Conclusion

CSEA remains steadfast in our commitment to protecting the workers who keep New York moving. We urge you to **support these critical safety measures** in the FY2026 state budget. Together, we can ensure that those who serve our communities do so **without fear for their lives**.

For more information:

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