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NYS Joint Legislative Public Hearing
on 2026 Executive Budget Proposal: Transportation
Testimony in Support of In Support of the Stop Super Speeders Act
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My name is Amy Cohen, and I am the President and Founder of Families for Safe Streets, an organization of families who have lost loved ones or been forever changed by traffic violence. I am also here as a mother who lost her son, Sammy, in a crash when he was just 12 years old. I miss him every single day.

He had his whole life ahead of him — school, friends, dreams. One afternoon, I kissed him goodbye. As he left, he said, *“I love you, Mom.”* He walked a few blocks to his middle school, where he was in eighth grade. I went to work, then to my daughter’s open school night. I never imagined those would be his last words — or that I would never see him alive again. Our policy failures and that driver’s choices failed Sammy and destroyed my family.

Two years ago, this Legislature and Governor Hochul took an important step by including Sammy’s Law in the budget. That law was a lifeline for families like mine. It reminded us that the state is willing to take concrete action to protect children and communities from reckless drivers. But as much as we celebrated that victory, the work is far from done. Too many families are still grieving. Too many lives are still lost. Too many crashes are still happening every day in every corner of this state.

For what is now the third legislative session, members of Families for Safe Streets have traveled to Albany to urge action on the Stop Super Speeders Act, trying to stop the most dangerous drivers from causing harm. We are deeply grateful to the Senate for passing the bill last year, but we cannot wait any longer for this bill to become law. Every day that passes, more lives are at risk.

Traffic crashes continue to devastate our communities. In New York City alone last year, 206 people were killed and over 3,000 were seriously injured — that’s four people a week. Across New York State, crashes kill more than 1,000 people and injure more than 150,000 every year. Speeding is a leading factor. Approximately one in three traffic

deaths statewide involves speeding, and fatalities have climbed by more than 30 percent in just a few years, even as total crashes have declined.

The Stop Super Speeders Act is about protecting everyone from the *worst of the worst* drivers — the habitual speeders who repeatedly break the law and put others in grave danger. These “super speeders” are responsible for a disproportionate share of deaths and injuries. In New York City, there are cases like Miriam Yarimi in Midwood, Brooklyn, who killed a mother and her two young children when they were crossing the street near their home. Her vehicle had accumulated more than 90 tickets, including 18 school-zone speeding tickets in a single year. Or the tragic death of three-month-old Apolline Mong-Guillemin, killed in her stroller in Clinton Hill by a vehicle that had 92 tickets over five years. These are not rare accidents — they are predictable consequences of drivers who repeatedly put speed above safety.

The Stop Super Speeders Act provides a solution that works. It requires these drivers to have anti-speeding technology, Intelligent Speed Assistance devices, installed in their vehicles for one year. These devices physically prevent a car from exceeding the speed limit by more than five miles per hour. They adjust automatically as speed limits change using GPS and digital maps, and some even detect posted signs with cameras. The device attaches to the accelerator, not the brakes, so a driver cannot override it. If they try to accelerate beyond the limit, the car simply slows down.

This approach is modeled on MADD’s ignition interlock device program, which has successfully prevented drunk drivers from operating vehicles. Similarly, ISA targets the drivers most likely to kill or seriously injure someone, without taking away their ability to get to work, school, or medical appointments. It’s a life-saving tool that is fair, non-punitive, and non-carceral. The current approach of suspending licenses simply does not work — we know that 75 percent of people continue to drive even after losing their license, including Miriam Yarimi, who was driving with a suspended license when she hit and killed three New Yorkers. ISA allows super speeders to drive safely while retraining their habits, reducing the likelihood of tragedy in the future.

The Stop Super Speeders Act applies to any driver who accumulates 11 or more speeding points in 18 months, which currently triggers a license suspension, and any vehicle that receives 16 or more automated speed camera tickets in a year. Municipalities outside of New York City may opt in for the speed camera threshold. The worst offenders are small in number — less than one percent of all drivers — but their impact is enormous, and by targeting them, we save lives.

The program is also practical and cost-effective. Installation costs about \$150, removal \$100, and operation just \$4 per day. For drivers who qualify for public assistance or have limited income, the cost can be waived or reduced. The program uses the existing

administrative infrastructure from the ignition interlock program, meaning the state can implement it without significant new expense.

The technology is proven. The NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) uses speed limiters in the city fleet. A study by the U.S. Volpe Center found that over 894,938 miles driven with ISA installed, vehicles complied with speed limits 99.74 percent of the time, and hard braking events — key indicators of unsafe driving — fell by 36 percent. Studies from Sweden, the U.K., and the Netherlands show active ISA can reduce serious injuries and fatalities by 15-21 percent. Compliance is expected to be higher than ignition interlock or license suspension programs because speeding is a behavior, not an addiction. Moreover, drivers can still go about their lives while the device keeps them safe.

It is important to note that Governor Hochul's budget proposal is currently a pilot for New York City only, focused on the area with the highest density of automated speed enforcement and the most urgent traffic safety needs. This pilot will allow the state to refine processes, demonstrate effectiveness, and ensure a smooth rollout. I look forward to seeing this program expanded statewide, protecting residents across Long Island, upstate New York, and all communities in between. This pilot is the first step toward a New York where everyone, in every city and town, is safe from reckless speeding.

This legislation is also about national leadership. New York was the first state in the nation to propose this type of law. Since then, similar legislation has passed in the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Washington State, and more than a dozen states are expected to consider similar bills this year. By passing this bill, New York will protect its residents and set the standard for the rest of the country.

Beyond saving lives, ISA reduces noise, moderates aggressive acceleration, lowers emissions, and creates safer streets for everyone, even super speeders themselves. It applies fairly, even for shared vehicles, because violations follow the car, not the individual, while still allowing responsible use. Data privacy is maintained: devices only report compliance information to the state, not real-time location or routes.

This bill is about justice, fairness, and common sense. It targets the drivers who are most dangerous, not those who occasionally make mistakes. It provides a tool for the courts to intervene in a way that actually prevents harm. It allows New Yorkers to live their lives, work, and raise their families safely.

As a mother who has lost a child to reckless speeding, I can tell you there is nothing more urgent than preventing another family from experiencing the loss I live with every

day. This bill is the tool that can do that. It is effective, equitable, and ready to be implemented.

I urge you — on behalf of my son Sammy, on behalf of all families who have lost loved ones, and on behalf of every New Yorker who deserves to travel our streets without fear — to support the Stop Super Speeders Act and include it in this year's state budget. I know the nights filled with "what ifs." And I know that, without action, another family will experience the same heartbreak. Let us save lives before they are lost, honor those we have already lost, and take the first step toward a statewide safety program that protects every New Yorker.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to the safety of every New Yorker.

*See FSS White Paper for details and research sources at
<https://www.familiesforsafestreets.org/stop-super-speeders>

