

S. 5634

A. 8239

2011-2012 Regular Sessions

S E N A T E - A S S E M B L Y

June 8, 2011

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IN SENATE -- Introduced by Sen. ZELDIN -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Local Government

IN ASSEMBLY -- Introduced by M. of A. GRAF -- read once and referred to the Committee on Transportation

AN ACT to amend the general municipal law, the vehicle and traffic law, the state finance law and the criminal procedure law, in relation to establishing a traffic and parking violations agency in the county of Suffolk

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1     Section 1. Section 370 of the general municipal law is amended by  
2     adding a new subdivision 3 to read as follows:  
3     3. THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SUFFOLK MAY BY LOCAL LAW  
4     ESTABLISH A TRAFFIC AND PARKING VIOLATIONS AGENCY TO ASSIST THE SUFFOLK  
5     COUNTY DISTRICT COURT TO ADMINISTER AND DISPOSE OF TRAFFIC AND PARKING  
6     INFRACTIONS.  
7     S 2. Section 370-a of the general municipal law, as added by chapter  
8     496 of the laws of 1990, subdivision 1 as amended by chapter 527 of the  
9     laws of 2002, is amended to read as follows:  
10    S 370-a. Definitions. For the purpose of this article:  
11    1. "Traffic and parking violations agency" shall mean a department of  
12    the Nassau county government established pursuant to subdivision two of  
13    section three hundred seventy of this article OR A DEPARTMENT IN THE  
14    SUFFOLK COUNTY GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO SUBDIVISION THREE OF  
15    SUCH SECTION to administer and dispose of traffic and parking infrac-  
16    tions.  
17    2. "Traffic prosecutor" shall mean an attorney duly admitted to prac-  
18    tice law in the state of New York who, having been appointed and either  
19    hired or retained pursuant to section three hundred seventy-four of this

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[ ] is old law to be omitted.

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1 article, has the responsibility of prosecuting any traffic and parking  
2 infractions returnable before the Nassau county district court OR THE  
3 SUFFOLK COUNTY DISTRICT COURT pursuant to the jurisdictional limitations  
4 of section three hundred seventy-one of this article.

5 S 3. Subdivisions 2, 3 and 4 of section 371 of the general municipal  
6 law, subdivision 2 as amended by chapter 19 of the laws of 2009, subdi-  
7 vision 3 as amended by chapter 496 of the laws of 1990 and subdivision 4  
8 as amended by chapter 465 of the laws of 1998, are amended to read as  
9 follows:

10 2. The Nassau county traffic and parking violations agency, as estab-  
11 lished, may be authorized to assist the Nassau county district court,  
12 AND THE SUFFOLK COUNTY TRAFFIC AND PARKING VIOLATIONS AGENCY, AS ESTAB-  
13 LISHED, MAY BE AUTHORIZED TO ASSIST THE SUFFOLK COUNTY DISTRICT COURT,  
14 in the disposition and administration of infractions of traffic and  
15 parking laws, ordinances, rules and regulations and the liability of  
16 owners for violations of subdivision (d) of section eleven hundred elev-  
17 en of the vehicle and traffic law in accordance with section eleven  
18 hundred eleven-b of such law, except that such [agency] AGENCIES shall  
19 not have jurisdiction over (a) the traffic infraction defined under  
20 subdivision one of section eleven hundred ninety-two of the vehicle and  
21 traffic law; (b) the traffic infraction defined under subdivision five  
22 of section eleven hundred ninety-two of the vehicle and traffic law; (c)  
23 the violation defined under paragraph (b) of subdivision four of section  
24 fourteen-f of the transportation law and the violation defined under  
25 clause (b) of subparagraph (iii) of paragraph d of subdivision two of  
26 section one hundred forty of the transportation law; (d) the traffic  
27 infraction defined under section three hundred ninety-seven-a of the  
28 vehicle and traffic law and the traffic infraction defined under subdi-  
29 vision (g) of section eleven hundred eighty of the vehicle and traffic  
30 law; (e) any misdemeanor or felony; or (f) any offense that is part of  
31 the same criminal transaction, as that term is defined in subdivision  
32 two of section 40.10 of the criminal procedure law, as a violation of  
33 subdivision one of section eleven hundred ninety-two of the vehicle and  
34 traffic law, a violation of subdivision five of section eleven hundred  
35 ninety-two of the vehicle and traffic law, a violation of paragraph (b)  
36 of subdivision four of section fourteen-f of the transportation law, a  
37 violation of clause (b) of subparagraph (iii) of paragraph d of subdivi-  
38 sion two of section one hundred forty of the transportation law, a  
39 violation of section three hundred ninety-seven-a of the vehicle and  
40 traffic law, a violation of subdivision (g) of section eleven hundred  
41 eighty of the vehicle and traffic law or any misdemeanor or felony.

42 3. A person charged with an infraction which shall be disposed of by  
43 either a traffic violations bureau [or], the Nassau county traffic and  
44 parking violations agency, OR THE SUFFOLK COUNTY TRAFFIC AND PARKING  
45 VIOLATIONS AGENCY may be permitted to answer, within a specified time,  
46 at the traffic violations bureau, [and] in Nassau county at the traffic  
47 and parking violations agency AND IN SUFFOLK COUNTY AT THE TRAFFIC AND  
48 PARKING VIOLATIONS AGENCY, either in person or by written power of  
49 attorney in such form as may be prescribed in the ordinance or local law  
50 creating the bureau or agency, by paying a prescribed fine and, in writ-  
51 ing, waiving a hearing in court, pleading guilty to the charge or admit-  
52 ting liability as an owner for the violation of subdivision (d) of  
53 section eleven hundred eleven of the vehicle and traffic law, as the  
54 case may be, and authorizing the person in charge of the bureau or agen-  
55 cy to enter such a plea or admission and accept payment of said fine.  
56 Acceptance of the prescribed fine and power of attorney by the bureau or

1 agency shall be deemed complete satisfaction for the violation or of the  
2 liability, and the violator or owner liable for a violation of subdivi-  
3 sion (d) of section eleven hundred eleven of the vehicle and traffic law  
4 shall be given a receipt which so states. If a person charged with a  
5 traffic violation does not answer as hereinbefore prescribed, within a  
6 designated time, the bureau or agency may cause a complaint to be  
7 entered against him forthwith and a warrant to be issued for his arrest  
8 and appearance before the court, such summons to be predicated upon the  
9 personal service of said summons upon the person charged with the  
10 infraction. Any person who shall have been, within the preceding twelve  
11 months, guilty of a number of parking violations in excess of such maxi-  
12 mum number as may be designated by the court, or of three or more  
13 violations other than parking violations, shall not be permitted to  
14 appear and answer to a subsequent violation at the traffic violations  
15 bureau or agency, but must appear in court at a time specified by the  
16 bureau or agency. Such bureau or agency shall not be authorized to  
17 deprive a person of his right to counsel or to prevent him from exercis-  
18 ing his right to appear in court to answer to, explain, or defend any  
19 charge of a violation of any traffic law, ordinance, rule or regulation.

20 4. Notwithstanding any inconsistent provision of law, fines, penalties  
21 and forfeitures collected by the Nassau county OR SUFFOLK COUNTY traffic  
22 and parking violations agency shall be distributed as provided in  
23 section eighteen hundred three of the vehicle and traffic law. All  
24 fines, penalties and forfeitures for violations adjudicated by the  
25 Nassau county OR SUFFOLK COUNTY traffic and parking violations agency  
26 pursuant to subdivision two of this section, with the exception of park-  
27 ing violations, and except as provided in subdivision three of section  
28 ninety-nine-a of the state finance law, shall be paid by such [agency]  
29 AGENCIES to the state comptroller within the first ten days of the month  
30 following collection. Each such payment shall be accompanied by a true  
31 and complete report in such form and detail as the comptroller shall  
32 prescribe.

33 S 4. Section 374 of the general municipal law, as amended by chapter  
34 527 of the laws of 2002, is amended to read as follows:

35 S 374. Traffic prosecutor selection and oversight. (a) The executive  
36 director of the Nassau county traffic and parking violations agency, AND  
37 THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY TRAFFIC AND PARKING  
38 VIOLATIONS AGENCY, appointed pursuant to subdivision (b) of this  
39 section, shall select and may contract with or hire one or more persons  
40 who are attorneys, duly admitted to the practice of law in New York  
41 state for the prosecution of any traffic and parking infraction, except  
42 those described in paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) of subdi-  
43 vision two of section three hundred seventy-one of this article, to be  
44 heard, tried or otherwise disposed of by the district court of Nassau  
45 county IN THE CASE OF AN ATTORNEY SELECTED BY THE NASSAU COUNTY EXECU-  
46 TIVE DIRECTOR, OR BY THE DISTRICT COURT OF SUFFOLK COUNTY, IN THE CASE  
47 OF AN ATTORNEY SELECTED BY THE SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. Such  
48 persons shall be known as "traffic prosecutors", as that term is defined  
49 in section three hundred seventy-a of this article. Traffic prosecutors  
50 shall have the same power as a district attorney would otherwise have in  
51 the prosecution of any traffic or parking infraction which may, pursuant  
52 to the jurisdictional provisions of section three hundred seventy-one of  
53 this article, be prosecuted before the district court of Nassau county  
54 OR THE DISTRICT COURT OF SUFFOLK COUNTY, AS THE CASE MAY BE. The execu-  
55 tive director shall give active consideration to requiring that such  
56 traffic prosecutors serve on a full-time basis. Traffic prosecutors are

1 prohibited from appearing in any capacity other than as a traffic prose-  
2 cutor in any part of the Nassau county district court OR THE SUFFOLK  
3 COUNTY DISTRICT COURT, AS THE CASE MAY BE on any matter relating to  
4 traffic or parking violations and are further prohibited from appearing  
5 in any capacity other than as a traffic prosecutor in any other court or  
6 administrative tribunal on any matter relating to traffic or parking  
7 violations.

8 (b) The county executive of the county of Nassau shall appoint a  
9 person to serve as the executive director of the Nassau county traffic  
10 and parking violations agency subject to the confirmation of the county  
11 legislature of the county of Nassau. THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE OF THE COUNTY  
12 OF SUFFOLK SHALL APPOINT A PERSON TO SERVE AS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF  
13 THE SUFFOLK COUNTY TRAFFIC AND PARKING VIOLATIONS AGENCY SUBJECT TO THE  
14 CONFIRMATION OF THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE OF THE COUNTY OF SUFFOLK. The  
15 executive director shall be responsible for the oversight and adminis-  
16 tration of the agency. The executive director OF NASSAU COUNTY is  
17 prohibited from appearing in any capacity in any part of the Nassau  
18 county district court AND THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SUFFOLK COUNTY IS  
19 PROHIBITED FROM APPEARING IN ANY CAPACITY IN ANY PART OF THE SUFFOLK  
20 COUNTY DISTRICT COURT on any matter relating to traffic or parking  
21 violations and is further prohibited from appearing in any capacity in  
22 any other court or administrative tribunal on any matter relating to  
23 traffic or parking violations.

24 (c) It shall be a misdemeanor for the executive director, any traffic  
25 prosecutor or any judicial hearing officer assigned to hear traffic or  
26 parking violations cases pursuant to section one thousand six hundred  
27 ninety of the vehicle and traffic law to establish any quota of traffic  
28 violation convictions which must be obtained by any traffic prosecutor  
29 or judicial hearing officer. Nothing contained herein shall prohibit the  
30 taking of any job action against a traffic prosecutor or judicial hear-  
31 ing officer for failure to satisfactorily perform such prosecutor's or  
32 officer's job assignment except that the employment productivity of such  
33 prosecutor or officer shall not be measured by the attainment or nonat-  
34 tainment of any conviction quota. For the purposes of this section a  
35 conviction quota shall mean a specific number of convictions which must  
36 be obtained within a specific time period.

37 (d) The legislature of the county of Nassau may appropriate those  
38 monies which, in the legislature's sole discretion, are necessary for  
39 the compensation of those persons selected to serve as executive direc-  
40 tor and traffic prosecutors and to cover all other expenses associated  
41 with the administration of the Nassau county traffic and parking  
42 violations agency.

43 (E) THE LEGISLATURE OF THE COUNTY OF SUFFOLK MAY APPROPRIATE THOSE  
44 MONIES WHICH, IN THE LEGISLATURE'S SOLE DISCRETION, ARE NECESSARY FOR  
45 THE COMPENSATION OF THOSE PERSONS SELECTED TO SERVE AS EXECUTIVE DIREC-  
46 TOR AND TRAFFIC PROSECUTORS AND TO COVER ALL OTHER EXPENSES ASSOCIATED  
47 WITH THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUFFOLK COUNTY TRAFFIC AND PARKING  
48 VIOLATIONS AGENCY.

49 S 5. The article heading of article 44-A of the vehicle and traffic  
50 law, as added by chapter 496 of the laws of 1990, is amended to read as  
51 follows:

52 AUTHORITY OF THE NASSAU AND SUFFOLK  
53 COUNTY DISTRICT COURT  
54 JUDICIAL HEARING [OFFICER] OFFICERS

1 S 6. The section heading, subdivision 1 and subdivision 4 of section  
2 1690 of the vehicle and traffic law, the section heading and subdivision  
3 4 as added by chapter 496 of the laws of 1990 and subdivision 1 as  
4 amended by chapter 420 of the laws of 2001, are amended to read as  
5 follows:

6 Authority of the Nassau county AND SUFFOLK COUNTY district court judi-  
7 cial hearing [officer] OFFICERS. 1. Notwithstanding any other provision  
8 of law, where the trial of a traffic or parking infraction is authorized  
9 or required to be tried before the Nassau county district court OR  
10 SUFFOLK COUNTY DISTRICT COURT, and such traffic and parking infraction  
11 does not constitute a misdemeanor, felony, violation of subdivision one  
12 of section eleven hundred ninety-two, subdivision five of section eleven  
13 hundred ninety-two, section three hundred ninety-seven-a, or subdivision  
14 (g) of section eleven hundred eighty of this chapter, or a violation of  
15 paragraph (b) of subdivision four of section fourteen-f or clause (b) of  
16 subparagraph (iii) of paragraph d of subdivision two of section one  
17 hundred forty of the transportation law, or any offense that is part of  
18 the same criminal transaction, as that term is defined in subdivision  
19 two of section 40.10 of the criminal procedure law, as such a misdemea-  
20 nor, felony, violation of subdivision one of section eleven hundred  
21 ninety-two, subdivision two of section eleven hundred ninety-two,  
22 section three hundred ninety-seven-a or subdivision (g) of section elev-  
23 en hundred eighty of this chapter, or a violation of paragraph (b) of  
24 subdivision four of section fourteen-f or clause (b) of subparagraph  
25 (iii) of paragraph d of subdivision two of section one hundred forty of  
26 the transportation law, the administrative judge of the county in which  
27 the trial court is located, may assign judicial hearing officers to  
28 conduct such a trial. Such judicial hearing officers shall be village  
29 court justices or retired judges either of which shall have at least two  
30 years of experience conducting trials of traffic and parking violations  
31 cases and shall be admitted to practice law in this state. Where such  
32 assignment is made, the judicial hearing officer shall entertain the  
33 case in the same manner as a court and shall:

34 (a) determine all questions of law;

35 (b) act as the exclusive trier of all issues of fact;

36 (c) render a verdict;

37 (d) impose sentence; or

38 (e) dispose of the case in any manner provided by law.

39 4. Judicial hearing officers are prohibited from appearing in any  
40 capacity other than as a judicial hearing officer in any part of the  
41 Nassau county OR SUFFOLK COUNTY district court on any matter relating to  
42 traffic or parking violations and are further prohibited from appearing  
43 in any capacity other than as a judicial hearing officer in any other  
44 court or administrative tribunal on any matter relating to traffic or  
45 parking violations.

46 S 7. Subdivision 5 of section 350.20 of the criminal procedure law, as  
47 added by chapter 496 of the laws of 1990, is amended to read as follows:

48 5. Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision one of this section,  
49 FOR ALL PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE DISTRICT COURT OF NASSAU COUNTY the  
50 administrative judge of Nassau county may, AND FOR ALL PROCEEDINGS  
51 BEFORE THE DISTRICT COURT OF SUFFOLK COUNTY, THE ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE OF  
52 SUFFOLK COUNTY MAY, without the consent of the parties, assign matters  
53 involving traffic and parking infractions except those described in  
54 paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) of subdivision two of section  
55 three hundred seventy-one of the general municipal law to a judicial  
56 hearing officer [for all proceedings before the district court of Nassau

1 county] in accordance with the provisions of section sixteen hundred  
2 ninety of the vehicle and traffic law.

3 S 8. Subdivision 1 of section 225 of the vehicle and traffic law, as  
4 amended by chapter 173 of the laws of 1990, is amended to read as  
5 follows:

6 1. Notwithstanding any inconsistent provision of law, all violations  
7 of this chapter or of a law, ordinance, order, rule or regulation relat-  
8 ing to traffic, except parking, standing, stopping or pedestrian  
9 offenses, which occur within a city having a population of two hundred  
10 thousand or more in which administrative tribunals have heretofore been  
11 established, [or within that portion of Suffolk county for which a  
12 district court has been established,] and which are classified as traf-  
13 fic infractions, may be heard and determined pursuant to the regulations  
14 of the commissioner as provided in this article. Whenever a crime and a  
15 traffic infraction arise out of the same transaction or occurrence, a  
16 charge alleging both offenses may be made returnable before the court  
17 having jurisdiction over the crime. Nothing herein provided shall be  
18 construed to prevent a court, having jurisdiction over a criminal charge  
19 relating to traffic or a traffic infraction, from lawfully entering a  
20 judgment of conviction, whether or not based on a plea of guilty, for  
21 any offense classified as a traffic infraction.

22 S 9. Subdivision 3 of section 99-a of the state finance law, as  
23 amended by chapter 465 of the laws of 1998, is amended to read as  
24 follows:

25 3. The comptroller is hereby authorized to implement alternative  
26 procedures, including guidelines in conjunction therewith, relating to  
27 the remittance of fines, penalties, forfeitures and other moneys by town  
28 and village justice courts, and by the Nassau [county] AND SUFFOLK COUN-  
29 TIES traffic and parking violations [agency] AGENCIES, to the justice  
30 court fund and for the distribution of such moneys by the justice court  
31 fund. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the alternative proce-  
32 dures utilized may include:

33 a. electronic funds transfer;

34 b. remittance of funds by the justice court to the chief fiscal office  
35 of the town or village, or, in the case of the Nassau [county] AND  
36 SUFFOLK COUNTIES traffic and parking violations [agency] AGENCIES, to  
37 the county treasurer, for distribution in accordance with instructions  
38 by the comptroller; and/or

39 c. monthly, rather than quarterly, distribution of funds.

40 The comptroller may require such reporting and record keeping as he or  
41 she deems necessary to ensure the proper distribution of moneys in  
42 accordance with applicable laws. A justice court or the Nassau [county]  
43 AND SUFFOLK COUNTIES traffic and parking violations [bureau] AGENCIES  
44 may utilize these procedures only when permitted by the comptroller, and  
45 such permission, once given, may subsequently be withdrawn by the comp-  
46 troller on due notice.

47 S 10. Subdivision 2 of section 99-1 of the general municipal law, as  
48 amended by chapter 179 of the laws of 2000, is amended to read as  
49 follows:

50 2. The [county] COUNTIES of Nassau AND SUFFOLK shall be entitled to  
51 receive the amounts set forth in subdivision one of this section for the  
52 services of [the Nassau] THEIR RESPECTIVE county traffic and parking  
53 violations agency and for all services in each case of a parking  
54 violation, instituted and triable in such agency, wherein a fine is  
55 imposed, a surcharge of ten dollars.

1 S 11. Subdivision 2 of section 99-1 of the general municipal law, as  
2 added by chapter 261 of the laws of 1993, is amended to read as follows:

3 2. The [county] COUNTIES of Nassau AND SUFFOLK shall be entitled to  
4 receive the amounts set forth in subdivision one of this section for the  
5 services of [the Nassau] THEIR RESPECTIVE county traffic and parking  
6 violations agency.

7 S 12. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary no non-ju-  
8 dicial employee of the Suffolk county district court shall suffer a  
9 diminution of salary, employment status or rights solely by operation of  
10 this act provided that nothing herein shall limit the legal authority of  
11 the chief administrator of the courts to supervise the administration  
12 and operation of the unified court system.

13 S 13. The administrative judge of Suffolk county shall issue on an  
14 annual basis, beginning eighteen months following the creation of the  
15 Suffolk county traffic and parking violations agency pursuant to Suffolk  
16 county local law, a report detailing the progress, development and oper-  
17 ations of the traffic and parking violations agency. The report shall be  
18 provided to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, the  
19 speaker of the assembly, the Suffolk county executive, the Suffolk coun-  
20 ty board of supervisors, the presiding judge of the Suffolk county  
21 district court and the Suffolk county district attorney.

22 S 14. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, the  
23 amendments to sections 370-a, subdivisions 2, 3 and 4 of section 371 and  
24 section 374 of the general municipal law, the article heading of article  
25 44-A and the section heading and subdivisions 1 and 4 of section 1690 of  
26 the vehicle and traffic law and subdivision 5 of section 350.20 of the  
27 criminal procedure law, as made by sections two, three, four, five, six  
28 and seven of this act, respectively, shall take effect only in the event  
29 that the county of Suffolk shall have by local law established a traffic  
30 and parking violations agency; provided that the board of supervisors of  
31 the county of Suffolk shall notify the legislative bill drafting commis-  
32 sion upon the occurrence of the enactment of the legislation provided  
33 for in sections two, three, four, five, six and seven of this act in  
34 order that the commission may maintain an accurate and timely effective  
35 data base of the official text of the laws of the state of New York in  
36 furtherance of effectuating the provisions of section 44 of the legisla-  
37 tive law and section 70-b of the public officers law; provided, however,  
38 that the amendments to section 371 of the general municipal law made by  
39 section three of this act shall not affect the expiration of such  
40 section and shall be deemed to expire therewith; and provided that the  
41 amendments to subdivision 2 of section 99-1 of the general municipal law  
42 made by section ten of this act shall be subject to the expiration and  
43 reversion of such subdivision pursuant to section 6 of chapter 179 of  
44 the laws of 2000, as amended, when upon such date the provisions of  
45 section eleven of this act shall take effect.