STATE OF NEW YORK

9605

IN SENATE

March 27, 2026

Introduced by Sen. CLEARE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Transportation

AN ACT to amend the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to enacting the "real accessible pedestrian signal act"

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "real accessible pedestrian signal act".

§ 2. Legislative findings. The legislature finds that DeafBlind pedestrians and others with combined sensory disabilities cannot rely on visual, audio, or unraised text instructions to safely cross streets. To ensure effective communication and independent navigation, accessible pedestrian signals must include tactile features such as braille, raised lettering, and raised lines.

§ 3. The vehicle and traffic law is amended by adding a new section 1118 to read as follows:

§ 1118. Accessible pedestrian signals. (a) Definitions. For purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

1. "Pedestrian signal" means a traffic control device designed to regulate pedestrian traffic.

2. "Accessible pedestrian signal" means a pedestrian signal designed to assist pedestrians with visual, auditory, physical, or combined sensory disabilities in locating and activating the pedestrian phase.

3. "Tactile map" means a tactile sign or surface affixed to or integrated with an accessible pedestrian signal that utilizes braille, raised lettering, and raised lines to convey information necessary for safe pedestrian crossing.

4. "Pushbutton locator tones" means tones emitted by an accessible pedestrian signal to assist pedestrians with visual disabilities in locating the pushbutton.

(b) Requirement of accessibility in pedestrian signals. 1. In any town, city, or village, all pedestrian signal units installed or constructed on or after the effective date of this section shall be accessible pedestrian signals and shall include tactile maps.

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

LBD14865-01-6

2. Pedestrian signal units installed prior to the effective date of this section shall not be required to be retrofitted or replaced solely to comply with this section, but shall be brought into compliance only when such units are replaced or upgraded as part of routine maintenance, repair, modernization, or end-of-life replacement.

3. Tactile maps shall include, at minimum:

a. Identification of the relevant intersection and crossing location (for example, "Northeast corner of 42nd Street and Broadway");

b. Instructions for operating the signal, including identification of tactile, vibratory, visual, or audible features; and

c. Raised and braille text identifying the crossing direction and orientation.

(c) Clarification of applicability and limitations. 1. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any municipality, the department of transportation, the department of transportation of the city of New York or any municipal department responsible for the installation and maintenance of pedestrian signals to accelerate planned replacement schedules or incur costs beyond ordinary capital replacement cycles.

2. The department of transportation, the department of transportation of the city of New York and any municipal department responsible for the installation and maintenance of pedestrian signals may continue to install and deploy accessible pedestrian signal units owned or held in inventory prior to the effective date of this section, until such inventory is exhausted.

(d) Maintenance of pushbutton locator tones. Pushbutton locator tones shall be maintained in working condition and shall remain reasonably capable of directing pedestrians with visual disabilities to the accessible pedestrian signal unit.

(e) Priority of installation of accessible pedestrian signals. Nothing in this section shall be construed to delay, postpone, or diminish any existing obligation of the department of transportation, the department of transportation of the city of New York or any municipal department responsible for the installation and maintenance of pedestrian signals to install accessible pedestrian signals, replace non-accessible pedestrian signals, repair malfunctioning units, or comply with any court order or settlement currently in effect in the state of New York.

(f) Responsibility. The department of transportation, the department of transportation of the city of New York and any municipal department responsible for the installation and maintenance of pedestrian signals shall be responsible for compliance with the provisions of this section relative to any accessible pedestrian signal unit over which such department has jurisdiction.

§ 4. This act shall take effect on the sixtieth day after it shall have become a law.