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**Letter of Support by NYS Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon
to the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles
November 6, 2023
I.D. No. MTV-36-23-00031-P
Point System and Licensing or Relicensing After Revocation Action**

I am writing in support of the DMV's proposed amendments that would strengthen the State's regulations to remove dangerous drivers from the road. The amendments would bolster the State's ability to remove driver's licenses from people who engage in risky driving behavior and make it harder for those individuals to get their licenses reinstated. I am also highlighting alternative measures for consideration that could be adopted along with the DMV's proposed changes to make our roads safer.

During an Assembly legislative hearing in September of 2023 on intoxicated and impaired driving, the New York State Police noted that more than 7,000 alcohol-related traffic crashes took place in the state last year, resulting in 335 deaths. Since 2019, there has been a 30% increase in deaths from alcohol-related traffic crashes. In my district in Brooklyn, I have seen an increase in violent high-speed collisions since the pandemic began, many of which involved reckless driving or drunk driving. Too many of these deaths are preventable tragedies. We must take steps to make our roads safer.

I support DMV's proposals to increase the number of points associated with dangerous driving and decrease the threshold at which dangerous drivers are disqualified from holding a license.

I believe there is another option that the DMV should explore regarding curtailing DWI repeat offenders. DMV proposes to lower the number of alcohol or drug-related convictions from 5 to 4 in order to deny an application for re-licensure; this makes sense to keep New Yorkers safe but 4 is still too many and an ignition interlock device (IID) is more effective for reducing intoxicated driving. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and researchers maintain that installing an IID is the best way to curb repeat offenders and keep pedestrians and drivers safe. Assemblymember Carrie Woerner and Senator Jeremy Cooney have introduced [A4171/S775A](#) – which I co-sponsor and which passed the Senate last year – to establish standards to increase the utilization of an IID after the conviction of a misdemeanor level DWI. As Assemblymember Woerner states, "This bill closes a key loophole and provides a means for people, especially those living in rural communities, to continue to drive to work as opposed to potentially losing their license."

Unfortunately, people with suspended licenses may continue to drive and an ignition interlock device is critical to preventing drunk driving because it separates drinking from driving by preventing the operator from driving while under the influence of alcohol. I strongly suggest that DMV expand and support the use of IIDs to truly prevent drunk driving.

I would also like to take this opportunity to inform you about my bill ([A1627](#) Simon/[S776](#) Liu) that would reduce the legal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) from .08 to .05. More than a third of crashes in New York State involve alcohol. The share of traffic fatalities related to DWIs has increased since the pandemic. The National Traffic Safety Association has long recommended every state lower their BAC to .05 based on extensive evidence that it is a proven countermeasure that saves lives. This bill will lower the BAC threshold so we can combat reckless driving - and raise awareness - to stop these preventable tragedies. New York was once a leader in combating drinking and driving, but we have fallen behind, and it's time to update our standards and join Utah and over 100 countries from across the world that have adopted this standard.

I have long advocated for street safety and policies that align with evidence-based practices. This is why I wholeheartedly support the efforts the DMV is taking to combat drunk driving and fight against repeat reckless offenders. I urge the DMV to support robust expansion of the use of IIDs and to lower the BAC to further save lives.

Very truly yours,



Jo Anne Simon
Member of Assembly