



LITTERING FINES

A.206 (Fields, et al.)

S.53 (DeFrancisco, et al.)

Summary

This legislation would increase the fines assessed for littering under Section 1220 of the vehicle and traffic law.

Explanation

Litter continues to be a problem in New York State. Each year state and local agencies and community members spend countless man hours cleaning up litter and debris from the state's roadsides, stream banks, and beaches. The thoughtlessness of individuals who toss bottles, food wrappers, and cigarette butts on the ground instead of in garbage receptacles makes our public spaces unattractive.

Government and civic efforts to clean up litter are widespread. For instance, in New York State over 2,400 Adopt-A-Highway programs are in place, dedicated to cleaning litter from over 5,000 miles of highways. In 2004, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection picked up almost 1,500 cubic yards of trash from the waters around the city using a small flotilla of skimmer boats. Other volunteer efforts happen around the state throughout the year, spending countless man-hours removing litter from our roadsides, beaches, and other public places. These programs are supported with public funds and through the willingness of volunteers to donate their time to these efforts.

While these efforts are important and much-needed, the most effective way to reduce litter is prevention. Meaningful penalties and enforcement are effective deterrents to littering. This bill would increase the monetary penalties associated with littering.

Environmental Advocates of New York supports this bill.

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