



Testimony on the FY 2027 Executive Budget Proposal Transportation

The Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) represents thousands of transportation employees across New York State, including workers at the Department of Transportation (DOT), Thruway Authority, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), local highway departments, departments of public works, and public transit systems. These workers are responsible for maintaining our state's infrastructure, ensuring the safety of the drivers and vehicles on our roads, and keeping New Yorkers moving.

The Dangers Faced by Our Workers

For these employees, workplace danger is a daily occurrence. In 2024, two State Thruway Authority employees, including CSEA member Stephen Ebling, were killed after being struck while working on the job. In May 2025, a DOT employee died from injuries sustained in a work zone crash. Just one month later, three DOT highway maintenance workers were injured when a vehicle driven by a person high on nitrous oxide intruded into an active work zone. These tragedies and near-misses reflect a persistent and unacceptable threat to workers tasked with keeping our roads safe.

Hazards are not limited to roadside work. DMV employees routinely encounter volatile and dangerous situations while performing their duties. A joint DMV–CSEA survey found that more than half of motor vehicle license examiners reported experiencing workplace violence, including assaults, violent threats, and even kidnapping attempts. When individuals fail a road test or face license enforcement actions, frustration is too often directed at the examiner seated next to them. Despite efforts to improve safety, DMV worksites remain environments where employees face serious risks.

Legislative Solutions in the FY2027 Budget

CSEA supports proposals included in the FY2027 Executive Budget to enhance transportation worker safety, including:

TEDE Part F – Enhanced Transportation Worker Protections

This proposal would elevate the penalty for **assaulting** a highway worker, DMV license examiner, or DMV representative from a **Class A misdemeanor to a Class D felony** and would also establish new offenses for **menacing a highway worker** and **intruding into an active work zone**.

These workers serve the public, often in situations where tensions run high—whether it's an individual who just failed a driving test, a driver upset over a suspended license, or motorists

frustrated by construction-related delays. Increasingly, those tensions manifest not only as physical assaults, but as threats and dangerous behavior that put workers' lives at risk.

While frustration is understandable, violence, intimidation, and reckless intrusion into work zones are never acceptable. This legislation sends a **clear message**: threatening or endangering these employees carries serious consequences.

TEDE Part G – Expanding the Work Zone Camera Program

This proposal would expand the work zone speed camera program to include all New York highways under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transportation, Thruway Authority, Bridge Authority or the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority. Under current law, the program is limited to “controlled-access” highways. These cameras save lives. Highway workers overwhelmingly agree: **when a camera is present, drivers slow down.**

To further protect our workers, CSEA urges the inclusion of additional provisions, including:

- Providing **\$500,000** in additional funding for DOT's **Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Program**, which pays for maintenance and traffic protection services of the Division of State Police.
- **S.4649 (Cooney) / A.4016 (Magnarelli)**: Increases penalties on drivers who fail to abide by the state's Move Over Law.
- **S.4647 (Cooney) / A.4015 (Magnarelli)**: Increases penalties for speeding in a work zone.
- **S.4646 (Cooney) / A.4011 (Magnarelli)**: Suspends the registrations of vehicles cited five or more times by a work zone speed camera within an 18-month period.
- **A.8978 (Kay)**: Directs the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles to make failure to move over a five-point violation.

Conclusion

CSEA remains committed to protecting the employees who maintain our transportation systems and serve the public under increasingly dangerous conditions. We urge the Legislature to advance these critical safety initiatives in the FY2027 state budget so that workers can perform their jobs without risking their lives.

For more information:

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