



NEW YORK STATE SENATE DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY

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Senate Majority Takes Action to Enhance Affordability and Protect New Yorkers from Being Nickel and Dimed

Includes the “New York Junk Fee Protection Act”, Would Make NY A National Leader in Protecting Consumers

(Albany, NY) Today, in a move to bolster financial relief for residents, the Senate Democratic Majority will pass a package of legislation that will help address New York’s growing affordability problem. This legislative package is a targeted effort to eliminate a variety of frustrating and costly fees, ensuring that individuals and families keep more of their hard-earned money in their pockets. Central to this initiative is the drive to make daily financial interactions simpler and more transparent, thereby putting an end to the practice of "nickel and diming" consumers.

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, “As the New York State Senate Majority Leader, I am immensely proud of the legislative package we've advanced today. This is a comprehensive strategy aimed at alleviating the financial strain on New Yorkers. By tackling a wide array of unnecessary and burdensome fees, we are taking concrete steps to ensure that the hard-working residents of our state keep more of their money where it belongs - in their pockets. Our approach is clear: enhancing affordability, promoting transparency, and safeguarding consumer rights are paramount to fostering a more economically secure and prosperous New York for all. I thank the bill sponsors for their dedicated efforts in safeguarding the financial interests of New Yorkers.”

Bill sponsor and Deputy Leader Senator Michael Gianaris said, “Junk fees hurt consumers and undermine competition. My proposal would make New York a national leader in taking bold steps to protect people from these deceptive fees. Junk fees often harm the most vulnerable communities, and by requiring transparent pricing we would create a more equitable economy for all.”

The legislation being passed by the Senate Democratic Majority includes:

- **New York Junk Fee Prevention Act:** This bill, [S7783B](#), sponsored by Senator Micheal Gianaris, eliminates hidden junk fees by requiring sellers to display the total price of a good or service, including all mandatory fees.
- **Money Transmission Fraud Warnings:** This bill, [S177](#), sponsored by Senator Michael Gianaris, would require money transmitters to provide consumers with certain warnings about potential fraud prior to completing the transfer.
- **Toll Payer Protection Act:** This bill, [S492B](#), sponsored by Senator Leroy Comrie, would establish a tolls by mail program to improve the process for notifying drivers about tolls and fines incurred, ensure that fines are fair and that vehicle registrations are not suspended because of an outstanding bill.
- **Vehicle Inspection Expiration Notification:** This bill, [S1242A](#), sponsored by Senator Simcha Felder, requires the Department of Motor Vehicles to notify individuals that their personal motor vehicle inspection is subject to expiration 30 days beforehand, and provides a five-day grace period after the expiration during which time the individual shall not be fined.
- **Prohibiting Benefit Banking Services Fees:** This bill, [S2601A](#), sponsored by Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal, would prevent banks from imposing any fees for use of electronic benefit transfer cards issued by the state, certain departments or agencies.
- **E-ZPass Deposit Fees:** This bill, [S1361A](#), sponsored by Senator Tim Kennedy, would waive the deposit fee required when purchasing a new E-ZPass for 60 days following a toll increase and require E-ZPass vendors to offer a cash payment option.
- **Post Close-Out Bank Account Fees:** This bill, [S1065](#), sponsored by Senator Shelley Mayer, would limit a bank's ability to charge former members with fees after their account has been closed, given the member possessed no withstanding charges.
- **Health Club Contract Cancellation:** This bill, [S932C](#), sponsored by Senator Roxanne Persaud, would enhance consumer protections by requiring health clubs to accept cancellation of a membership within three business days of receiving the notice of cancellation and allow for electronic cancellation of membership contracts.
- **Credit Card Service Charge Cap:** This bill, [S363](#), sponsored by Senator Kevin Thomas, would create a cap on the credit card service charge on a retail installment contract.

Bill sponsor Senator Simcha Felder said, “For hardworking New Yorkers, these GOT YA' tickets are infuriating! Give people notice and a pinch of grace, and they will get it done without any extra fines, fees and stress.”

Bill sponsor Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal said, “The New York State Senate Democratic Conference is committed to protecting New Yorkers from unnecessary and burdensome hidden fees, whenever possible. I am thankful to Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins for including our bill (S.2601A) to prevent banks from imposing any fees on the use of electronic benefit transfer cards issued by the State or other government agencies. EBT benefits are meant to help low-income New Yorkers secure their basic necessities, not fill the pockets of greedy banks and ATM operators. I am looking forward to passing the full Nickle and Dime package the Senate Majority has put forth today, which together will protect New Yorkers from unfair fees and allow them more choice on how to spend their hard-earned money.”

Bill sponsor Senator Tim Kennedy said, “My bill would make it easier for New Yorkers to buy an E-Zpass by allowing them to purchase the passes with cash. As many individuals in our State do not have access to a bank account or an electronic payment method for their financial transactions, a cash payment option is necessary. In addition, my bill would waive the deposit fee for an extended period of time following toll rate increases. When toll rates rise, it’s imperative we create solutions to offset consumers' costs and keep as much money as possible in drivers' pockets.”

Bill sponsor Senator Shelley Mayer said, “Too often, I have heard complaints about the difficulty consumers face when their bank account is closed. Frequently, banks will keep their accounts active, even after notification that the account is closed, and charge customers for low account balances and overdraft penalties when third parties request payments from the account. I am pleased that New York State is resisting these nuisance fees that contribute to the crisis of affordability for working people. Thank you to Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and my colleagues for moving these important bills, and demonstrating our unwavering commitment to consumers.”

Bill sponsor Senator Roxanne Persuad said, “At a time in which New Yorkers are enduring a rapidly climbing cost of living, the last thing they need are junk and nuisance fees attached to necessary services. That's why I'm proud to support this package, and I'm happy to see my bill, S932-C, included within it. This bill will ensure New Yorkers can cancel their health club contracts quickly and easily, and not be stuck continually paying for a service they no longer desire. I want to thank Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins for including this bill within the package, and my Senate colleagues for their support.”

Bill sponsor Senator Kevin Thomas said, “Installment credit can be beneficial for consumers because it allows them to take home and use products while they make payments towards the product's total price. My bill would protect consumers by curbing the abusive practice of charging exorbitant interest rates on these contracts by setting a cap on these rates.”

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