



News from the Office of
Adam J. Bello
Monroe County Executive



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MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO SIGNS CARRIE RAY'S 3-FOOT PASSING LAW TO PROTECT BICYCLISTS

Named for Carrie Ray, a Brockport elementary school teacher and mom killed in 2019 while bicycling in Clarkson, the new law requires motorists to maintain a distance of at least three feet when passing a cyclist.

ROCHESTER, NY— Monroe County Executive Adam Bello, joined by Legislators Rachel Barnhart and Jackie Smith, Michael Ray and members of Reconnect Rochester, today signed Carrie Ray's 3-Foot Passing Law to Protect Bicyclists, requiring motorists to maintain a distance of at least three feet when passing a cyclist.

The law is named in honor of 46-year-old Carrie Ray, a Brockport elementary school teacher and mom who was bicycling on Sweden Walker Road in October 2019 when she was struck and killed by a passing pickup truck.

“Carrie Ray's 3-Foot Passing Law to Protect Bicyclists is a critical and life-saving piece of legislation,” said Bello. “Unfortunately, New York State law doesn't give concrete guidance about how much space we should give bicyclists on the roads – the law just says drivers must remain a ‘safe distance’ from cyclists. We all know that passing too closely is a dangerous and potentially deadly threat to cyclists and this new law defines a set standard distance that will help ensure that when our kids, spouses, moms and dads go out for a bike ride on a nice day, they are safer and better protected on our roadways.”

Thirty-three states and the District of Columbia already require a safe passing distance of three feet, and Suffolk County on Long Island passed a 3-foot law in April.

The local legislation was spearheaded by County Legislators Rachel Barnhart (D-Rochester) and Jackie Smith (R-Clarkson, Hamlin, Sweden).

Legislator Barnhart said: “This law puts Monroe County at the forefront of bicycle safety, as more than 30 states require a minimum 3-foot distance to pass bicycles. This law will raise awareness and provide clarity to drivers about how to safely share the road with cyclists.”

Legislator Smith said: “I am proud and honored to have been part of enacting this local law. I remember how rattled the entire Clarkson community was by Carrie Ray's passing, but I also

remember the loving diligence shown by her family. While the circumstances under which I met the Ray family were tragic, it has been moving to work with them to create this legislation that will make our community safer. This legislation exemplifies Carrie’s legacy of caring for her family and community and her memory will be honored in keeping cyclists and pedestrians safe here in Monroe County every day.”

Jesse Peers, cycling coordinator at Reconnect Rochester, said: “The majority of drivers just don’t know the law or what happens to a cyclist when a driver passes too closely. This three-foot law provides clarity. Regardless of our mode of transportation, we all have more to learn about safely sharing our roads.”

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