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 T H E C O U N C I L

REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

JEFF BAKER, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

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COMMITTEE ON STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATION

#### Hon. Alan Maisel, Chair

May 27, 2021

**By: Council Member Maisel**

**Preconsidered SLR 3: S.524-A (Hoylman, Benjamin, Biaggi, Gounardes, Jackson, Myrie, Rivera, Salazar, Sepulveda)**

**A.4655-A (Gottfried, Carroll, Seawright, Simon, Gonzalez-Rojas, Burdick, Gallagher, Paulin, Dinowitz, Epstein, Glick, Hevesi, McDonough, Davila)**

**TITLE:** AN ACT to amend the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to establishing speed limits in cities with populations in excess of one million people.

**BACKGROUND:**

At least 243 New Yorkers died as a result of traffic crashes in 2020, the deadliest year on City streets since the implementation of the Vision Zero campaign in 2014. While speed limit reductions and traffic calming measures are proven policies that save lives, the State’s Vehicle and Traffic Law currently limits the City’s ability to reduce speed limits. This legislation is an effort to provide New York City with the ability to implement further measures to improve street safety.

Named for a 12 year old from Brooklyn killed by a reckless driver in 2013, “Sammy’s Law” would amend State law to give New York City the authority to reduce speed limits to 20 miles per hour on streets in designated areas or citywide. The bill would also authorize the City to lower speed limits to five miles per hour where physical traffic calming measures – including open streets – are implemented. While the law would give the City the authority to lower speed limits, it would not mandate speed limit reductions, and any proposed speed limit changes would remain subject to existing community notice requirements.

**PROPOSED LEGISLATION:**

Section one of the legislation declares that the act will be known as “Sammy’s law”.

Section two adds to and amends section 1642 of the vehicle and traffic law to allow for a city to set a speed limit throughout the city of not less than 20 miles per hour. Section two also allows speed limits to be set below 20 miles per hour with traffic calming measures, but no lower than five miles per hour.

Section three is the effective date.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:**

See Council Finance Division fiscal impact statement.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:**

Immediately.