



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 838

Resolution urging the State Legislature to ban the use of grille-guards/bull bars on the front of all motor vehicles that operate in the city of New York.

By Council Members Vallone Jr., McMahon, Nelson and Gennaro

Whereas, The grille-guard, also known as a bull bar, brush guard or roo bar, are metal bars installed on the front bumper of motor vehicles, originally designed to protect the vehicle from animal collisions and bumps and scratches normally associated with off-roading; and

Whereas, The original intention of grille-guards is not applicable in most metropolitan regions of the United States such as New York City, but rather are used to protect against minor bumps incurred within city limits or most often, simply are used as a cosmetic accessory; and

Whereas, Modern vehicle designs include a crumple zone at the front of the vehicle to cushion the impact and reduce the force pressed upon vehicle occupants; however, most grille-guard designs bridge the crumple zone with a rigid structure, exposing the occupants to a much greater risk of injury; and

Whereas, Although life-saving airbags are equipped with sensors that signal the airbag operation, grille-guards may obstruct the sensors and render the airbag useless in the event of an accident, further exposing the occupants to a higher risk of injury; and

Whereas, Grille-guards pose a greater threat to pedestrians and cyclists because in a collision with a pedestrian or cyclist, the extra rigidity of grille-guards would cause greater direct injury, and since the point of impact tends to be higher, the victim bears the full brunt of the impact; and

Whereas, Grille-guards pose a greater threat to the drivers and passengers of other vehicles because in

collisions with other cars, the force of impact tends to be higher on the struck vehicle, which may directly hit the chest or head of the occupants; and

Whereas, A 1998 study by Australia's University of Adelaide found that damage to a child's head when struck by a vehicle equipped with a small diameter steel grille-guard was 10 to 15 times worse than damage inflicted by a vehicle without such a guard; and

Whereas, In January of 2004, Rob Schneider from Fresh Meadows, NY, was severely injured when his vehicle was struck by another fitted with a steel grille-guard which at 35 mph deflected the force into him rather than absorbing the energy; and

Whereas, In October of 2002, 18-year-old Dereck Lopez of Fort Worth, TX, was killed in an accident when her Cavalier was side-struck by a Silverado equipped with a rigid, steel grille-guard, smashing into the driver's side window and fracturing Ms. Lopez's skull; and

Whereas, Although the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards prohibits making "inoperable" any safety feature or element of design in a motor vehicle, grille-guards violate two important standards by making airbags inoperable and by reducing the amount of available crush space and crumple zones of motor vehicles; and

Whereas, New York City has a greater number of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians than most cities in the United States, demonstrating the clear necessity to protect these vulnerable groups from serious injury or fatality in the event of an accident; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the city of New York urges the State Legislature to ban the use of grille-guards/bull bars on the front of all motor vehicles that operate in the city of New York.