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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senator Luis Sepúlveda and the Senate Majority Pass Legislation to Improve Limousine Safety and Protect Passengers

(Bronx, NY) Senator Luis Sepúlveda and the Senate Majority passed legislation to strengthen limousine safety protocols to ensure passengers and operators are protected on their journeys. The proposed bills will include measures to improve limousine safety standards and bring the State's Safe Limo website in line with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's SAFER site; enforce a vehicle retirement threshold at ten years or 350K miles; require that limos be equipped with emergency tools like window break devices and fire extinguishers, as well as be outfitted with roll-over protection devices like cages and anti-intrusion bars; increase penalties for operators who disobey inspections and get unsafe commercial vehicles off the road; and extend the Stretch Limousine Passenger Safety Task Force.

Limousines are the vehicle of choice for many important milestones and celebrations. However, they present unique and particular challenges that can drastically affect the safety of those using them. This package of legislation is part of an ongoing effort to improve oversight and enforcement of the industry, so that their operation remains as safe as possible. New Yorkers understand the importance and urgency of this issue in the wake of the 2015 Long Island accident where four individuals were killed, and the 2018 Schoharie crash where 20 lives were lost—making it the deadliest U.S. road accident in nearly 20 years. This legislative package is part of an ongoing effort to prevent the same mistakes from happening again, and avert future tragedies by improving the State's approach to limo regulation. These bills are an important step in addressing current concerns and incorporating the recommendations that came from diligent work by the Passenger Safety Task Force that the Senate worked to create in 2020.

I applaud the Senate Majority for their efforts to strengthen limousine safety protocols and protect those who choose to travel in these vehicles. The proposed legislation takes important steps to improve safety standards and equipment, enforce stricter regulations, and increase consequences for non-compliant operators. This package of bills shows a dedication to

preventing future tragedies, like the devastating 2015 Long Island and 2018 Schoharie accidents, and promoting a safer transportation experience for all

The legislation being passed includes:

- **Strengthening Limo Safety Ratings:** This bill, S1371, sponsored by Senator Neil Breslin, improves the Safe Limo safety rating system to line it up more closely with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's SAFER system and compare three years' worth of data.
- **Limousine Safety Briefing Requirements:** This bill, S1367, sponsored by Senator Monica Martinez, creates a pre-trip safety briefing for passengers, similar to those administered for airline passengers or other commercial rides.
- **Vehicle Retirement Thresholds:** This bill, S1443A, sponsored by Senator Michelle Hinchey, ages out stretch limousine vehicles at 350,000 miles or 10 years—whichever comes first—with exceptions for antiques, show cars, and similar vehicles.
- **Equipping Limos with Emergency Tools:** This bill, S1442, sponsored by Senator Jessica Scarcella-Spanton, requires stretch limos to be equipped with window break tools as well as operational fire extinguishers, and have them incorporated into the inspection process.
- **Requiring Roll-Over Protection Devices:** This bill, S1368, sponsored by Senator Tim Kennedy, requires stretch limousines to be equipped with roll-over protection and anti-intrusion devices—including cages, pillars, and anti-intrusion bars—to better protect rear compartment passengers in the event of a crash.
- **Increased Penalties for Disobeying Inspections and Expanded Seizure of Unsafe Vehicles:** This bill, S1370A, sponsored by Senator Tim Kennedy, strengthens penalties when a stretch limousine has failed an inspection but an operator still uses the vehicle. It also authorizes the seizure and redemption of the unlawfully operated and unsafe commercial vehicles by an officer, and requires the vehicle information to be entered into the New York statewide police information network as an impounded vehicle.
- **Extending the Stretch Limousine Passenger Safety Task Force:** This bill, S1369, sponsored by Senator Tim Kennedy, extends the Stretch Limousine Passenger Safety Task Force's operations by extending it to December 31, 2024. It also directs the Task Force to continue to hold whatever public hearings and meetings are necessary to review the State's implementations of the original Task Force report that was released in October 2022. It will provide recommendations and an updated report on its findings by April 15, 2024.