

SENATOR OBERACKER STANDS UP FOR LOCAL ROADS

Joins call for key highway funds to be included in the state budget

ALBANY, 03/07/21 – State Senator Peter Oberacker (R/C – Schenevus) recently joined with legislators from across the state at the Capitol to call for increased state funding for local highway improvements.

“Local roads and bridges, and the dedicated workers that maintain them, are essential to public safety and our economy,” said Senator Oberacker. **“As a past chairman of the Otsego County Public Works Committee and a town supervisor, I understand how critical state funding is to our local governments as officials make decisions on road and bridge maintenance. As work on the state budget progresses, our upstate infrastructure must be a leading priority.”**

The governor’s 2021-22 budget has proposed “expanding our infrastructure plan to invest \$306 billion in the future of New York.”

While welcoming the governor’s commitment to infrastructure investment in the new state budget, Senator Oberacker and the Local Roads Are Essential advocates are calling on New York to strengthen its commitment to local transportation. In his proposed budget, the governor holds base level funding for the Consolidated Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) at \$438 million for the ninth straight year and eliminates funding for Extreme Winter Recovery, a \$65-million cut.

“Even a modest increase in CHIPs funding would greatly help our local highway departments maintain and improve the roads we travel every day. Infrastructure funding needs to be spread throughout the state and parity for our region is a must,” added Senator Oberacker.

According to a recently updated analysis by the New York State Association of Town Superintendents of Highways, the local highway system outside of New York City faces an annual funding gap of \$1.7 billion.

In a letter to Governor Cuomo and legislative leaders, Senator Oberacker and his senate and assembly colleagues put forth two proposals depending on the amount of aid New York State receives as part of the next federal COVID relief package:

If New York State receives up to \$6 billion in federal aid, the group requests the following as part of the final 2021-22 state budget:

- Full restoration of the \$120.6 million cut in local transportation aid in 2020-2021;
- Fully funding the CHIPS base level at \$438 million;
- Increasing Extreme Winter Recovery funding to \$100 million;
- Fully funding the BRIDGE-NY program at \$100 million; and
- Fully funding the PAVE-NY program at \$100 million.

If New York State receives federal aid above \$6 billion, the group is seeking:

- Full restoration of the \$120.6 million cut in local transportation aid in 2020-2021;
- Increasing the CHIPS base funding level by \$150 million to a total of \$588 million;
- Increasing Extreme Winter Recovery funding to \$100 million;
- Doubling PAVE-NY local funding from \$100 million to \$200 million; and
- Doubling BRIDGE-NY local funding from \$100 million to \$200 million, with additional funding for culverts.

“Every part of our economy depends on safe, well maintained highways. Strengthening the state’s investment in our upstate roads and bridges will help grow jobs across the state and help build for our future,” Senator Oberacker concluded.