

May 16, 2014

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
NYS State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

We are seeking your support on a local control issue that will promote economic development and reduce preventable injuries and deaths on our roads. We ask that you support legislation that would give localities the power to set their own speed limit.

Existing state law prevents municipalities from adopting an area speed limit lower than 30 miles per hour. Some jurisdictions are able to lower that speed limit to 25 miles per hour on a street-by-street basis, while others must petition the New York State Department of Transportation, both of which are expensive and time-consuming propositions. In order to have a consistent, community-wide speed limit below 30 miles per hour, municipalities must petition the State Senate and Assembly to pass a bill—also a time-consuming proposition, that is rarely successful.

There are several benefits to giving localities the authority to set their own speed limits:

#### Fewer Injuries and Deaths

Speed kills, because drivers cause more crashes at higher speeds, because drivers don't have the time to slow down.<sup>1</sup> The crashes that drivers cause are also more deadly, because of the physics involved. Vehicle on pedestrian crashes that occur at 30 mph are ten times as deadly as crashes which happen at 20 mph.<sup>2</sup> Lowering speeds is especially important in areas that attract pedestrian traffic and where children congregate, given that children lack the ability to accurately perceive vehicle speeds until they begin puberty.

#### Local Control

Constituents, correctly, hold municipal leaders accountable for their health, safety and welfare in a way that comports with a jurisdictions' distinct characteristics. In order to protect them and help our communities thrive, municipal leaders need the ability to set their localities' own speed limit. To force an inflexible, one-size-fits-all statutory scheme on all municipalities is an untenable state mandate.

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<sup>1</sup> A driver who is travelling at 20 mph can come to a complete stop within three car lengths. A driver who is travelling at 30 mph will take six car lengths to stop.

<sup>2</sup> Literature Review on Vehicle Travel Speeds and Pedestrian Injuries, US Department of Transportation, National Highway Safety Administration, Oct 1999, available at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/research/pub/hs809012.html>

Economic Development

Villages, towns and cities with the power to choose a lower speed limit would have a powerful, low-cost tool to create calmer and safer streets; and calmer streets have been proven to promote retail activity<sup>3</sup> and increase residential property values.<sup>4</sup>

Rather than pass a special law for each locality, we ask that you instead support legislation that will give jurisdictions the ability to set their own speed limit at a reasonable level.

Sincerely,

*See attached list of supporters*

cc. Assemblyman Gantt  
Senator Robach  
Speaker Silver  
Senate Majority Leader Klein  
Senate Majority Leader Skelos

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<sup>3</sup> The Economic Benefits of Sustainable Streets, NYC Department of Transportation, Oct 2013, available at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/dot-economic-benefits-of-sustainable-streets.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Christopher B. Leinberger and Mariela Alfonzo, "Walk this Way: The Economic Promise of Walkable Places in Metropolitan Washington, D.C.," Brookings Institute, May 25, 2012, available at <http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2012/05/25-walkable-places-leinberger>.

**Mayors and Supervisors**

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Mayor  
City of Albany  
Albany County

Rich Negri  
Mayor  
City of Corning  
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Shayne Gallo  
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A. Martin Petrovic  
Mayor  
Village of Trumansburg  
Tompkins County

**Resolutions Pending in:**

Town of Cuba  
Village of Barneveld  
Town of Ithaca  
Town of Bellmont  
Town of Canadice  
Town of Goshen  
Town of Minisink

Josh Wilson  
Executive Director  
New York Bicycling  
Coalition

**Organizations**

Gerry Geist  
Executive Director  
Association of Towns

Peter Baynes  
Executive Director  
New York Conference of  
Mayors

Beth Finkel  
State Director  
AARP New York

Justin Booth  
Executive Director  
GObike Buffalo

Michael Governale  
Executive Director  
Reconnect Rochester

Veronica Vanterpool  
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Tri-State Transportation  
Campaign

Robin Dropkin  
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Valley Greenway

M. Andre Primus  
Founder  
RocShare

Daniel Flanzig  
Partner  
New York Bike Lawyers

Glen Cerosaletti  
Director  
Rochester cycling  
Alliance

Sriram Bakshi  
Trustee  
Seymour Library

Roger Brown  
President  
Community Design  
Center Rochester

Richard Drosse  
Coordinator  
Friends of great  
Bear/Voiney-Fulton

*Coalition Member List:*

**Empire State Future**

Adirondack Council • American Farmland Trust • American Institute of Architects – New York Chapter American Institute of Architects – New York State • American Planning Association – New York Upstate Chapter Audubon – New York • Bike Walk Alliance of Westchester & Putnam • Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition • Building Performance Lab- CUNY • The Catskill Center • Centerstate Corporation for Economic Opportunity • East Coast Greenway Alliance • Environmental Advocates of New York • FXFowle Architects, PC • Green Options Buffalo • Green Village Consulting – Rochester • Hunt Engineers, Architects and Land Surveyors, PC. IBI Group • Jonathan Rose Companies • Landmark Society of Western New York • League of Women Voters of New York State • The Leyland Alliance • Local Initiative Support Corporation, Buffalo • Mid-Hudson Pattern for Progress • Natural Resources Defense Council • The Nature Conservancy – New York • NeighborWorks – Rochester • New York Bicycling Coalition • New York Civic • New York League of Conservation Voters • New York Planning Federation • New York State Association of County Health Officials • New York State Urban Council • Orange County Citizens' Foundation • Parks & Trails New York • Partners for a Livable Western New York • Partnership for the Public Good- Buffalo • Preservation League of New York State • Project For Public Spaces • Regional Plan Association • Rochester Regional Community Design Center • Scenic Hudson • Sierra Club – Atlantic Chapter • Smart Growth America • Sustainable Hudson Valley • Sustainable Long Island • Sustainable Saratoga • Sustainable South Bronx • Sustainable Tompkins • Syracuse First • The Stakeholders, Inc. • Ticonderoga Revitalization Alliance • Tri-state Transportation Campaign • University Transportation Research Center, Region II (UTRC) Urban Land Institute – New York District Council • Vision Long Island • WE ACT for Environmental Justice • Wildlife Conservation Society • W X Y architecture + urban design

**Long Island Lobby Coalition**

AARP • American Communities Institute at Dowling College • American Planning Association—LI Chapter • Child Care Council of Nassau • Child Care Council of Suffolk • Citizens Campaign for the Environment • Citizens Campaign for the Environment • Concern for Independent Living • Concerned Citizens of the Plainview-Old Bethpage Community • Coram Civic Association • Cornerstone Church of God in Christ • Dowling College • Elmont Chamber of Commerce • Empire State Future • EmPower Solar • Friends of the Bay • Glen Cove Business Improvement District • Good Harvest Financial Group • Greater Smithtown Chamber of Commerce • Greenman-Pedersen Inc. • HIA-LI • Hicksville Chamber of Commerce • Huntington Township Chamber of Commerce • Laible and Fitzsimmons Inc. • Lake Ronkonkoma Civic Organization • Long Island Business Council • Long Island Federation of Labor • Long Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce • Long Island Housing Partnership • Long Island Minority AIDS Coalition • Long Island Software and Technology Network • Longwood Alliance • Mastic Beach Property Owners Association • Mastics-Moriches-Shirley Community Library • Middle Island Civic Association • Nassau Council of Chambers of Commerce • Neighborhood Network • New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health • New York League of Conservation Voters • Plainview/Old Bethpage Chamber of Commerce • Renaissance Downtowns • Roel Resources • Save the Forge River • Selden Civic Association • Signature Organization • South Yaphank Civic Association • Sustainability Institute at Molloy College • Them TV • Tri-State Transportation Campaign • Uniondale Community Council • US Green Building Council Long Island Chapter • Verizon • Vision Long Island • Wading River Civic Association • Workforce Development Group • Youth of Ethical Societies Long Island Chapter

## **New York State Transportation Equity Alliance**

Abyssinian Development Corporation • Action Toward Independence Adirondack Council • Albany Bicycle Coalition • American Lung Assoc. in New York Arbor Hill Environmental Justice Asthma Free School Zone • ATU Local 1321 • ATU Local 726 • ATU Local 923 • BCID • Bedford Audubon Society • Belmont Housing Resources for WNY Beyond Oil NYC • Brooklyn Greenway Initiative • Capital Region Transit Advocates (CRTA) • CCCEH • Center for Disability Rights • Center for Working Families • Citizen Action NY • Citizens Regional Transit Corporation • City Council • Clean New York • Community League of the Heights • Community Voices Heard • East Coast Greenway Alliance • EDF • El Puente • Empire State Future • Environmental Advocates of New York • Environmental Justice Action Group of Western New York Fifth Ave Committee • For A Better Bronx(xx) • FXFOWLE Architects LLP • Good Jobs NY • Harlem Childrens Zone • Healthy Community Alliance • Highbridge Community Life Center • Hudson River Sloop Clearwater • League of Woman Voters New York State • Livable Streets Education • Long Island Progressive Coalition • Membership hopefuls • Metro Justice of Rochester • Metro New York Health Care for All • Mothers on the Move • Neighborhood Network • Neighbors Allied for Good Growth • NeighborWorks Rochester, Healthy Blocks Initiative • New York Academy of Medicine • New York Bicycling Coalition • New York City Environmental Justice Alliance • New York Jobs with Justice • New York Lawyers for Public Interest • New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV) • New York Public Interest Research Group, The Straphangers Campaign New York State Apollo Alliance • Niagara Heritage Partnership • North Shore Waterfront Conservancy of Staten Island • Nos Quedamos CDC • NRDC • NY County Acad. of family Phys. • Project for Public Spaces • Public Health Solutions • PUSH Buffalo • Rail\*Train\*Ecology\*Cyling • Reconnect Rochester • Recycle a Bicycle • Regional Plan Association • Resources for Children with Special Needs • RightRides • Rudin Center • Rudin Center • Scenic Hudson • Self Advocacy Assoc. of NYS • Sierra Club New York City Group • Sinergia • St. Alliance for Health • Sustainable Flatbush • Sustainable Hudson Valley • Sustainable Long Island • Sustainable South Bronx • Syracuse First • TEN • The Center for Independence of the Disabled, New York • The Morningside Heights/West Harlem Sanitation Coalition • The Partnership for Onondaga Creek • The Point CDC • The Pratt Center • The Westchester-Putnam Bike Walk Alliance • Transportation Alternatives • Tri-State Transportation Campaign • TWU Local 100 • UPROSE • Urban Agenda • Urban Design Lab, Earth Institute at Columbia University Vision Long Island • VOICE Buffalo • WE ACT for Environmental Justice • West Harlem Group Assistance Ydanis City Council • Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice