

March 11, 2016

Majority Leader John Flanagan
Room 909, LOB
Albany, NY 12247

Re: Funding for Pedestrian/Bicycling Infrastructure

Dear Majority Leader Flanagan:

At some point in the day, almost everyone is a pedestrian, whether they are walking to their car, to the bus, to work, or to school. Unfortunately, amidst the recent calls for funding parity between transit, roads and bridges, those who walk or bike to their destinations are often left out of the conversation.

We are requesting that within the \$22.1 billion proposed for the NYSDOT Capital Plan, a minimum of \$20 million in increased spending, each year for the five years of the Plan, be included to supplement the federal dedicated dollars for pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure (formerly known as the Transportation Alternatives Program).

By some measures, New York State is considered to be the nation's most dangerous place to bike and walk, with 29% of the people dying on our roads doing so while biking or walking to their destination. Moreover, motor-vehicle transportation accounts for the single largest share of our State's greenhouse gas emissions. In the context of the State's larger, more high-profile transportation infrastructure needs, the importance of projects that make it safer and more accessible to ride a bike, walk and take transit get lost. Additionally, there are declining and inadequate resources to meet the growing demand for this infrastructure. The two most recent federal transportation laws (MAP-21 and the FAST Act) have dedicated money to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, but over the years, these funds have been reduced by more than 30%. These declining resources inhibit the ability to implement the NYS Complete Streets law.

By making this additional \$20 million annual investment in bicycling and walking infrastructure, we will improve safety, help stimulate local economies, address challenges posed by climate change, and give New Yorkers access to healthy, low-cost transportation options to improve quality of life for the residents of our state. As New York State makes significant overall investments in our transportation system, please assure we are building a national model for a truly multi-modal transportation system that improves the health, safety, environment, local economies, and overall quality of life for all New Yorkers.

Thank you for allowing us to weigh in on this important process. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to our offices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jack M. Martins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

Senator Jack M. Martins, 7th SD

CC: Senator Catherine Young
Beth Garvey
Mike Paoli