



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senator Fuschillo to Introduce Legislation Allowing New York State to Enter Into Public-Private Partnerships to Expedite Road and Bridge Repairs Statewide

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. April 15, 2011

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New York State Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr., Chairman of the Senate's Transportation Committee, today announced that he will introduce legislation allowing New York State to enter into public-private partnerships in order to expedite and better fund infrastructure projects throughout the state.

Under the proposal, state agencies, such as the Department of Transportation (DOT), would be able to partner with private businesses to facilitate new capital projects, including much-needed road and bridge repair and replacement projects.

"New York's transportation infrastructure is at a crossroads. With a severely underfunded DOT capital plan and massive outstanding projects like the Tappan-Zee Bridge replacement, it is time for New York to explore effective and innovative ways to fund our transportation system," said Senator Fuschillo (R,C,I-Merrick). "Public-private partnerships are a proven tool we need to deliver vital projects on-time and under-budget."

Senate Majority Leader Dean G. Skelos said, "The state simply doesn't have the funding available to meet the tremendous need for highway and bridge repairs and replacement that exists in New York. We need creative responses and innovative solutions, such as the one proposed by Senator Fuschillo, to help address our infrastructure funding problem."

Under the proposal, state agencies would be given flexibility to enter into agreements with the private sector to finance the construction, maintenance and operation of transportation infrastructure and other capital projects. These agreements would maintain state ownership and oversight of public assets while utilizing the agility of the private sector to undertake large, costly projects that these agencies otherwise would not have the ability to undertake under the current fiscal climate, while realizing cost savings for taxpayers.

Currently state agencies do not have the resources necessary to address New York's infrastructure crisis. The Department of Transportation is in the final year of a two- year, \$7 billion capital plan that spends about \$3 billion below DOT-recommended funding levels.

According to the DOT, of the 17,400 state and local highway bridges in New York State, 5,521 of them are deficient today and another 3,000 will become deficient within the next 10 years. Annually, New York should be replacing or rehabilitating more than 300 bridges and 1,150 miles of highway line miles. In 2009, due to fiscal constraints, only 121 bridges and 661 lane miles were replaced or rehabilitated.

Public-private partnerships can play an important role in improving the state's infrastructure system.

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