



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

Senate Passes "Complete Streets" Legislation

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY June 24, 2011

| ISSUE: **TRANSPORTATION, SENIOR CENTERS, ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT**

The State Senate passed this week the “*Complete Streets*” legislation, which would help make roadways safer for all who use them. The bill (S.5411-A) requires state, county, and local transportation agencies to consider roadway design features that increase the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

Senator Montgomery, a sponsor of the bill, noted that *Complete Streets* design principles are roadway design features that accommodate and facilitate safe travel by pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists of all ages and abilities. These features include sidewalks, paved shoulders suitable for use by bicyclists, bicycle lanes, “share the road” signage, crosswalks, pedestrian control signalization, bus pull outs, curb cuts, raised crosswalks, ramps, and traffic calming measures designed to allow pedestrian and motor traffic to easily coexist.

A Federal Highway Administration safety review found that streets designed with these features improve safety for all users, such as enabling pedestrians to cross busy roads in two stages, improving bicycle safety and reducing left-turning motorist crashes to zero.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), over 300 pedestrians were killed on New York’s roadways in 2009 – more than 45 other states. Twenty-six percent of all traffic fatalities in New York State in 2009 involved pedestrians,

which is more than double the national average.

The legislation would require all state, county, and local transportation agencies to consider Complete Streets design principles on all projects which receive both federal and state funding. The legislation was developed in consultation with all interested parties, including the New York State Department of Transportation, the Governor, the Assembly, county and town highway superintendents, and advocacy groups.

The legislation is also supported by a number of organizations, including AARP, Tri-State Transportation Campaign, the New York State Association of Town Superintendents of Highways, the New York State County Highway Superintendents Association, the Business and Labor Coalition of New York, and the New York Academy of Medicine.

AARP, in a memo supporting the legislation, stated that “safe and accessible roadways and sidewalks are a critical link in our transportation system and vitally important to access community services” and that the legislation would “bring more of a balance to our roads and make them safe for all users.”

Tri-State Transportation Campaign, in a memo supporting the legislation, stated that “relatively small design and capital investments can result in significant safety improvements in our communities.”

The legislation has passed both houses of the Legislature and awaits action from the Governor.