



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Suzi Oppenheimer

Oppenheimer Hails Passage of "Complete Streets" Bill

SUZI OPPENHEIMER June 29, 2011

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Bill is Companion to Oppenheimer's Smart Growth Legislation Enacted Last Year

Senator Suzi Oppenheimer (D-Mamaroneck) is pleased to announce that the Senate and Assembly earlier this week passed the "Complete Streets" bill, S. 5411A, which will make New York roadways safer for all who use them. The legislation requires state and local agencies to utilize complete street design principles in evaluating roadway improvements.

Oppenheimer is a co-sponsor and key supporter of the legislation. "Complete Streets" is the companion bill to the Senator's Smart Growth Public Infrastructure legislation, which was

signed into law last year.

“Complete streets” design principles seek to ensure safe access to our public roads for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and users of public transportation, regardless of their age or mobility. In addition to improving public safety, complete streets can lower transportation costs, provide alternatives to automobile traffic and improve public health by encouraging walking and biking. Examples of these design features include sidewalks, paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, raised or improved crosswalks, ‘share the road’ signage, ramps and other measures that facilitate safe pedestrian and motor traffic.

“Establishing a more sensible approach to public infrastructure investments has been a top priority of mine,” said the Senator. “Combating urban and suburban sprawl, revitalizing downtown areas and expanding transportation alternatives will make for more vibrant, livable communities.”

The Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act of 2010, which was sponsored by Senator Oppenheimer, requires state agencies to consider smart growth criteria when evaluating public infrastructure projects. Smart growth practices promote economic growth and reinvestment in developed and developing areas, while preserving open space and protecting natural resources. “Complete Streets” principles complement smart growth by ensuring that the roadways in and around our neighborhoods are safe and accessible for all.

“The ability to travel safely, whether by foot, bicycle, public transportation or motor vehicle, is a critical component to the revitalization of our cities, villages and towns,” observed Senator Oppenheimer. “Numerous studies have shown that even relatively modest capital investments can significantly improve traffic and pedestrian safety.”

Earlier this year, Senator Oppenheimer was instrumental in securing a grant for the Rye YMCA's Safe Routes to School program. The \$5,000 grant will be used to help fund school traffic and pedestrian safety measures in the Rye, Rye Neck, Harrison, Larchmont and Mamaroneck schools. Senator Oppenheimer is consistently rated one of the top New York legislators on environmental issues and was recently honored by the Audubon Society and the American Institute of Architects in New York State for her leadership on the smart growth bill.

The Complete Streets bill was supported by a broad coalition of community groups and organizations, including Empire State Future, AARP, the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, the New York State Association of Town Superintendents of Highways, the NYS County Highway Superintendents Association, the Business and Labor Coalition of New York and the New York Academy of Medicine.

"I urge Governor Cuomo to act quickly to sign this bill into law," concluded the Senator.