



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Dean G. Skelos

## Senate Passes Bridge Reform Act

DEAN G. SKELOS May 21, 2012

*Legislation will ensure funding goes directly to road and bridge repair*

The New York State Senate today passed the Bridge and Road Investment and Dedicated Fund Guaranteed Enforcement Reform Act, also known as the BRIDGE Reform Act. The bill (S.1071), sponsored by Senator Tom Libous, will ensure that the dedicated fund, originally enacted in 1991, will go towards rebuilding, replacing and reconditioning highways and bridges to improve the safety of drivers who travel them.

“The dedicated fund exists specifically for bridge and road repair to make taxpayers safer,” said Senator Libous. “This fund has been raided for unrelated state projects for years. My BRIDGE Act would end the raids and create a transparent funding stream to keep our roads and bridges safer.”

The dedicated fund now spends nearly three-quarters of its money on functions having nothing to do with improving bridges and highways, including operations at the Department of Motor Vehicles and routine snow and ice removal. By putting that funding back into

repairs, more than \$463 million would be added to road and bridge repair funds. The funds would be used to leverage additional monies for road and bridge projects.

“Through the years, the money that was intended for road and bridge repair has been misused,” said Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos. “It’s time we protect this fund to make sure that our taxpayers’ money goes where it should and is invested in projects that keep them safe as they travel.”

Nearly 30% of New York’s bridges are rated fair or poor, making their repair a priority as a matter of public safety. The bill phases out over five years the use of the Dedicated Fund for non-bridge and road expenses, and prohibits it from being used that way in the future.

The bill will be sent to the Assembly.