



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senator Fuschillo: Final State Budget Should Include \$100 Million Increase in Highway Funds for Local Governments

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. March 12, 2013

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Aid Increase, Which Would be the First Since 2008, Was Included in the Senate's Budget Resolution

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick), Chairman of the Senate's Transportation Committee, today called for a \$100 million increase in state highway aid to local governments to be included in the 2013-14 state budget. The \$100 million aid increase, which would enable localities to increase investment in road and bridge improvement projects, was included in the recently adopted Senate Budget Resolution that outlines the Senate's proposal for the state budget.

The Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) provides state funds to municipalities to support the construction and repair of roads, highways, bridges, and other facilities that are not part of the State highway system. CHIPS funding has been frozen in the last four state budgets and was proposed to be frozen again as part of the Executive's budget proposal.

With the \$100 million CHIPS funding increase, local governments would receive a total of over \$463 million in CHIPS funding for local infrastructure projects.

"On behalf of our organization's more than 900 elected and appointed transportation professionals, who maintain over half of the state's roads, we strongly support the efforts of Senator Fuschillo and the State Senate to increase local highway funding," said William Weller, Highway Superintendent for the Town of Florida and President of the NYS Association of Town Highway Superintendents of Highways (NYSAOTSOH). Superintendent Weller also noted that a 2007 study conducted by NYSAOTSOH reported New York State needs to invest an additional \$1.2 billion per year on local roads and bridges to prevent them from becoming deficient.

“We appreciate the strong support of Chairman Fuschillo for providing the necessary level of funding for these local transportation infrastructure investments especially at a time when local highway departments are facing substantial losses in federal highway aid as a result of the new federal transportation program, MAP-21,” said William Wright, President of the New York State County Highway Superintendents Association and Ontario County Highway Superintendent. “The Senator and many of his colleagues have long recognized the broad challenges county highway departments face in fixing and preserving their vast local systems of roads and bridges, much of which is over 50 years old and suffering from a lack of funding. We're glad we have them as partners and are hopeful that the final state budget will reflect these critical needs.”

“We know that sound roads are critical to a sound economy. There are so many roads under local jurisdiction, this funding is essential to keeping goods and consumers moving, supporting local and regional commerce. Further, our infrastructure workforce is underemployed and our qualified vendors and their equipment are underutilized, so this CHIPS funding would be particularly timely and effective in providing local jobs and revenue. Because local municipalities are often more facile in issuing bids and authorizing work, the impact of CHIPS funding will have a more immediate effect on our economy,” said Marc Herbst, Executive Director of the Long Island Contractors’ Association.