



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David Carlucci

## **Abinanti and Carlucci Call on DOT to Submit Rail Crossing Study**

Sen. Carlucci

April 20, 2018

ISSUE:

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VALHALLA, NY - "Despite a new law that requires a Department of Transportation study of railroad crossings and lots of pressure on Metro North, neither has done anything to make rail crossings any safer," said Assemblyman Tom Abinanti (D-Greenburgh/Mt. Pleasant) as he, Senator David Carlucci (Westchester/Rockland) and Alan Brody stood at the site of a tragic rail-car accident, three years ago on February 3, 2015.

Friday, Assemblyman Abinanti and Senator Carlucci held a press conference calling on the Department of Transportation (DOT) to conduct the required comprehensive review of all 5,300 railroad crossings throughout New York.

Two years ago, the Governor signed Abinanti's and Carlucci's bill (A5235B/S.3458B) requiring the DOT to conduct a comprehensive review and submit a report on the safety of railroad crossings to the Governor and the Legislature on or before April 1, 2017. The report was to include the accessibility of federal funds for improvement projects and the viability of implementing changes to increase safety. To date, the DOT has not submitted their report.

The bill was first introduced following a February 2015 Metro-North crash – the deadliest in the railroad's history – where a commuter train collided with an SUV at a highway-railroad grade crossing at the Commerce Street crossing in Valhalla. Since then, there have been two additional rail-crossing crashes-both in Rockland and Westchester- involving trains and passenger vehicles.

Although rail crossing accidents have declined nationwide, accidents in New York State have increased on the three major commuter rail lines.

"A comprehensive evaluation of these often-dangerous crossings will go a long way in protecting the health and safety of New Yorkers. Hopefully we'll be able to accomplish something and not have to keep coming back here," **said Assemblyman Abinanti.**

"Shame on the state Department of Transportation for dragging their feet on the rail crossing study. Lives continue to be lost because of the dangers at some of these aging rail crossings. We need a plan in place to upgrade them to prevent future tragedies," **said Senator Carlucci.**

“I can’t write legislation, but I’ll write a check for the highway engineer who presents the best analysis and proposal for improving railroad crossings,” **said Alan Brody, husband of Ellen Brody who died in the Metro North Collision.**