



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

## Senator Borrello and State, Local Officials Highlight Boost in Transportation Funding to the Region

GEORGE M. BORRELLO June 29, 2021

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FALCONER, New York and SALAMANCA New York – With the pandemic ending and predictions that this could be a record summer for travel, Senator George Borrello was joined by state and local officials at locations in Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties to announce major increases in state transportation aid for the region, as well as a new funding stream that will reduce municipalities’ costs for maintaining state touring routes.

“One of the issues I’ve been most vocal about during my public service at both the county and state levels has been the critical need for more transportation funding for our region. Western New York’s infrastructure is not only aging, it is subject to some of the harshest weather conditions in the state,” said Senator Borrello.

“For years, insufficient budget funding has meant that communities have had to get by with piecemeal repairs to roads and bridges that needed replacement. Motorists have had to navigate some roads so damaged that driving on them was like an obstacle course. All this disrepair has an impact that goes beyond inconvenience. Deteriorating roads and bridges have a negative impact on public safety, economic development and tourism,” said Senator Borrello.

“Fortunately, our voices and advocacy, in partnership with our county and town highway superintendents, generated results. Transportation funding in this year’s budget saw significant increases. Funding for the CHIPS program rose by approximately 23 percent and for the PAVE-NY and Extreme Winter Recovery programs, the increases were more than 50 percent,” said Borrello. “Altogether, the district is receiving \$17.2 million, which is 31 percent more than last year. As we look to strengthen our infrastructure and spur New York’s economic recovery, these smart, strategic investments in our transportation network will pay enormous dividends.”

In a stop at the Chautauqua County Highway Department facilities in Falconer, Senator Borrello was joined by Assemblyman Andy Goodell; County Executive P.J. Wendel; Brad Bentley, Director of the Chautauqua County Department of Public Facilities, County Legislature Chair Pierre Chagnon; and Scott Trisket, President of the Chautauqua County Highway Superintendents Association.

Brad Bentley, Director of the Chautauqua County Department of Public Facilities (DPF), said that the county is responsible for maintaining 550 miles of county roadway and 308 bridges. He noted that transportation funding from the state supports, on average, approximately 17 miles of roadway paving and 10 bridge rehabilitation projects. This year, the increased funding will allow DPF to complete approximately 32 miles of roadway paving and 16 bridge rehabilitation projects, helping the county make up for lost ground from underfunding in previous years.

“I thank Senator Borrello and Assemblyman Goodell for securing this additional funding to maintain our county roads and bridges,” said **County Executive Wendel**. “This additional state funding is key in helping counties and local governments catch up after many projects were delayed last year. Our county highway crews have a very ambitious schedule this summer and I would remind residents to please be courteous and safe in road construction zones.”

“Our region needs reliable infrastructure to ensure that goods and services move effectively and efficiently, to ensure the safety of our residents as they travel for work and transport their children to school or go to receive health care, to assure tourists that they can come here and safely enjoy the beauty of the area,” **Assemblyman Goodell said**. “Between the funding issues, challenging weather and aging infrastructure, our region has had to improvise and create temporary fixes, affecting the local economy and driver safety. With strong advocacy and support, funding has increased for CHIPS, PAVE-NY and Extreme Winter Recovery programs. The resulting improvements will strengthen our transportation systems and enhance our quality of life.”

Senator Borrello also announced that four cities in his district will be receiving funding from the newly created, \$100 million “City Touring Roads” program, which is dedicated funding for eligible municipalities that have capital maintenance responsibility for state touring routes. These main connecting roads support large volumes of traffic, requiring frequent and costly maintenance, which localities have

typically had to absorb on their own. This program will cover these costs for eligible communities.

Noting that Jamestown is slated to receive \$561,924 in touring route funds, Senator Borrello said, “Localities have been unfairly shouldering the maintenance costs of state routes for years. The City Touring Routes program addresses this inequity by allocating funds to eligible municipalities for these expenses. This new infusion of funding is good news for Jamestown and the other cities in the district receiving aid. It will help assure that needed repairs and upgrades aren’t delayed or scaled back for budgetary reasons.”

Senator Borrello stated that in addition to Jamestown, other cities in the 57<sup>th</sup> district slated to receive touring route funding include Gowanda, \$40,137; Olean, \$973,333; and Salamanca, \$331,134. Mayors and representatives of those three communities joined Senator Borrello, Assemblyman Joseph Giglio and other officials at the entrance to Veterans Memorial Park in Salamanca, alongside the recently repaved State Route 417, which will be among the roadways the city can maintain with the dedicated funds.

“I understand the continuing infrastructure needs in our region and have worked hard every year to secure adequate funding to meet our region’s needs. This year we were fortunate to see increased funding for the CHIPS, Extreme Winter Recovery, and PAVE-NY programs in the Enacted State Budget, as well as the addition of a new Touring Routes program to give an added boost to maintain and build infrastructure in this region and across the state,” **Assemblyman Giglio said**. “A strong infrastructure is crucial for the safety of our citizens and visitors, and for the economic vitality of our region. Stronger financial support for the maintenance and improvement of our roads, bridges, and culverts is welcome and necessary, and I am thrilled that the communities in our region will see a direct benefit from this increased funding in the State Budget.”

"We appreciate any funding to improve the roads going through our city," **said Salamanca Mayor Sandy Magiera**. "This increased funding will help us maintain our roads to the benefit of Salamanca residents and the traveling public."

“The City of Olean is committed to urban development and downtown safety; the funding from New York State’s City Touring Roads Program will support the upcoming South Union Street Gateway Project and West State Street Development. In addition, the restored and increased CHIPS funding will enable the city to return to the schedule, established by the Department of Public Works, to improve and repair streets throughout Olean,” **said Olean Mayor William Aiello**.

“On behalf of the Village of Gowanda, our Board of Trustees and our Residents, we are sincerely grateful to Senator Borrello and Assemblyman Giglio for their arduous efforts to restore and increase critical funding related to much needed highway improvements and enhancements. Given the reduction experienced last year due to the pandemic, we are thrilled to put it to use to make our community safer for vehicles and pedestrians alike,” **said Gowanda Mayor David Smith**.

“Our local highway departments are responsible for 87 percent of the state’s roadways and bridges. This increased investment will assure they have the resources they need to maintain and assure the safety of the thoroughfares that people depend on and utilize on a daily basis. This is a major quality of life and economic issue, and I thank all those at the state and local levels who advocated with us to achieve this important goal,” concluded Senator Borrello.