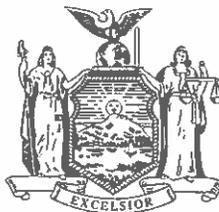


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THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



JAMES L. SEWARD
SENATOR, 51ST DISTRICT

June 17, 2011

ASSISTANT MAJORITY LEADER ON
CONFERENCE OPERATIONS

CHAIRMAN
INSURANCE COMMITTEE

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FINANCE
EDUCATION

HIGHER EDUCATION
AGRICULTURE
HEALTH
MENTAL HEALTH

Ms. Joan McDonald, Commissioner
NYS Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

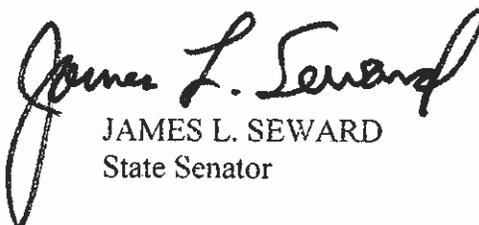
Dear Commissioner McDonald:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the NYS Department of Transportation's new special use permit 33a covering parades on state highways as well as requirements for the erection of temporary signs and banners for special events.

Specifically, I believe that this new permit will place an undue burden on municipalities and private organizations as they plan local parades and community events. For example, the Town of Burlington in Otsego County holds an annual Memorial Day parade; however, I have received significant comments from the community that the permit requirements to produce a traffic control plan, agency letters from law enforcement and emergency services, and specifications for banners, create an administrative deterrent for hosting local events. In addition, I am concerned that municipal underwriters will advise the towns not to assume the risk for local organizations' events. Non-profit organizations (county fairs, veterans' organizations, etc.) sponsoring events may find the cost of liability coverage to be prohibitive.

As you know, parades and special events generate significant revenue for our local towns and are an important part of community life. It would be a sad day if such events come to an end because of onerous DOT requirements. While I understand the department's efforts to ensure public safety, I urge you to reconsider the special use permit policy and the burden that it imposes on our communities.

Sincerely,



JAMES L. SEWARD
State Senator

JLS/jm

