

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK



TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY
SENATOR, 58TH DISTRICT

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October 10, 2012

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr.
Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
188 State Street Room 609, Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12247

Dear Senator Fuschillo:

As a member of the Senate Transportation Committee, I am writing today to ask that the Committee hold a hearing on the New York State Department of Transportation's (DOT) future plans for the Buffalo Skyway. Given recent state and federal investments at Ohio Street and Fuhrmann Boulevard, and planning underway for the Buffalo Harbor Bridge, a hearing on the future of the Buffalo Skyway is timely and appropriate.

For the past 52 years, the Buffalo Skyway has posed a real barrier to waterfront development and private sector investment happening along Buffalo's Outer Harbor. It cuts a scar through downtown Buffalo, obstructing views of the waterfront, as well as making it more difficult for residents to reach the water's edge. Removal of the Buffalo Skyway would undo the wrongs of the past and work cohesively with recent waterfront development projects proposed by Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation as well as the City of Buffalo.

The DOT released a report in 2008 stating that maintaining the current conditions of the Buffalo Skyway will cost the state approximately \$117 million over the next 20 years. Furthermore, the current DOT rating of the Skyway places the bridge at a 4.85 rating, or structurally deficient as categorized by the State. Recent estimates place removal of the Skyway at about \$20-25 million, providing a significant cost savings to New York State.

I look forward to working with you and your staff to plan a hearing on the future of the Buffalo Skyway and to ensure that the testifiers chosen are able to speak to these concerns. I appreciate your commitment to continuing to improve transportation in Western New York and throughout the State. Please contact my office at (716) 826-2683 to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy M. Kennedy".

Timothy M. Kennedy
New York State Senator, 58th District

cc: Senator Martin Dilan, 17th District
Commissioner Joan McDonald, NYSDOT