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May 8, 2014

Hon. Joan McDonald
Commissioner
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

Re: Nassau Expressway

Dear Commissioner McDonald,

I am reaching out to you regarding the construction delays affecting the Nassau Expressway. I share the sentiments of the elected officials interviewed in the April 27, 2014 Newsday article entitled "Crumbling Nassau Expressway seen as threat to hurricane evacuation." The Expressway directly affects the constituents I represent in Inwood. **Furthermore, close to 400,000** residents rely on the roadway as costal evacuation route. The present condition of the Expressway is a major concern for residents in several municipalities. **I respectfully request that we combine our efforts in making the proposed completion date of repairing this roadway a reality in the near future rather than the proposed completion date of 2025.**

As we continue to re-evaluate our efforts in government after lessons learned from Superstorm Sandy, the importance of repairing this road is clearly apparent because it is a major evacuation route. If we learned anything from Superstorm Sandy, it is the dire need for disaster and emergency preparedness. During Superstorm Sandy, the Expressway flooded. We do not need to speculate the number of lives that could be endangered if another major storm affects our area before 2025.

There are numerous reasons why this roadway's reconstruction should be an important goal. Before I state several reasons as to why it is important to repair this roadway, let me describe certain conditions that make this road dangerous. There is barely a section of the roadway that does not have uneven pavement or potholes. Over time, unusual dips formed in the asphalt due to heavy commercial traffic traversing on a daily basis. Poor drainage causes the roadway to flood during a normal rainfall. During a steady rainfall, poor drainage on the roadway creates massive puddles in parking lots such as Costco and the Bay Harbour Mall. Portions of the roadway do not have sidewalks. Such conditions are unacceptable.

First, there are significant safety and quality of life issues for everyone living and travelling through the impacted areas that are not being prioritized. According to law enforcement, there are numerous vehicular accidents on this roadway. In addition, heavy congestion during rush hour and non-rush hour times leads to longer response times for local emergency professionals.

With regard to Inwood, the area has been plagued by years of neglect. The Expressway is the main roadway for Inwood. The deterioration of the Expressway adds to the resident's frustration of believing they live in what some refer to as the 'Forgotten Town of the Five Towns.' The Expressway serves as a discouraging reminder to Inwood residents of a community that has been overlooked by their local government. Moreover, the quality of life in the neighborhoods surrounding the Expressway continues to diminish because of the litter, car exhaust, and heavy traffic. The residents of Inwood and the surrounding areas deserve better.

Second, the poorly designed and constructed roadway prohibits true economic development for Inwood and the surrounding areas comprising the Five Towns. Especially for Inwood, the disrepair of the Expressway hampers investment and redevelopment in the area. Heavy congestion during regular business hours leads to less opportunities for growth. The poor conditions discourage people from shopping and investing in the local shops and stores. Local merchants question whether their long-term growth will be diminished by prolonged delays to construction.

I must emphasize the need for public and elected officials to come together on this issue. It was clearly stated in the article that there is a lack of communication regarding a plan to fix the road. Several of the leaders interviewed had no idea of what the state was planning to do. For your convenience, I enclosed a copy of the article.

At this time I respectfully request an opportunity for us to meet, discuss a clear plan to fix this road, and bring together all interested parties. I believe we can come to a consensus. We owe it to the citizens our area to provide safe roads.

I look forward to speaking to you about efforts to get this project moving forward on an expedited basis. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Warmest Regards,



Nassau County Legislator, 3rd District

Enc.

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