



KEN BLANKENBUSH
Assemblyman 117th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
Agriculture Committee

COMMITTEES
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Insurance
Tourism, Parks, Arts & Sports Development

March 4, 2015

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

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

The deterioration of infrastructure within my district has become very troubling and is negatively impacting my constituents. I have been meeting with my local highway superintendents and speaking with emergency services, local residents and small-business owners, who have said that local infrastructure and the closure of bridges and bridge-like structures presents a hindrance to the way of life here in Northern New York and the Mohawk Valley, and a stumbling block for economic development. Worse yet, these closures are creating situations where emergency services struggle to get to certain residents, which is putting lives in danger.

Within my district, there are over 30 closed bridges. Vehicle weight limits have been reduced significantly on other bridges and structures, forcing trucks and large vehicles, including those used by emergency services and our local farmers, to take longer and less practical routes.

New York State must do more to help our municipalities maintain local infrastructure. I have been working to increase funding for the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPs) and invest a significant portion of the bank settlement into repairing our crumbling infrastructure.

Upstate New York lags in infrastructure improvements, and it will take a concerted effort from all parties to repair this problem. I would like to discuss this matter with you in person to see how the DOT can help our local municipalities repair or replace these bridges. My staff will be in contact with your office to schedule such a meeting.

Thank you for your attention to this troubling matter. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Ken Blankenbush
Member of Assembly
District 117

CC: Gov. Andrew Cuomo