

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

NICK CARACAPPA
Legislator, 4th District

Committees:

Public Works, Transportation
& Energy- Member
Environment, Parks
& Agriculture-Member
Veterans & Consumer Affairs-
Member



325 Middle Country Road
Suite 3
Selden, New York 11784-2545
Tel: (631) 854-9292
Fax: (631) 854-9351

E-mail:
nick.caracappa@suffolkcountyny.gov

May 11, 2021

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS Capital Building
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Marie Therese Dominguez
Commissioner, NYS Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

RE: Hazardous State Road Conditions

Dear Governor Cuomo and Commissioner Dominguez:

I am writing you today on behalf of myself, my colleagues within the Suffolk County Legislature and all constituents and family members of Suffolk County regarding the current conditions of several major New York State Roadways within and throughout Suffolk County. These include, but are not limited to: Interstate I-495 otherwise known as the Long Island Expressway (LIE), Route 27 (Sunrise Highway) and Route 25 (Middle Country Road).

These roadways are currently in deplorable condition and require immediate attention and proper, long-term repair. The current state of these roadways present very hazardous and dangerous driving conditions to the millions of commuters who depend upon these roadways on a daily basis. Whether it be for work or leisure, commuters place themselves in harm's way when entering these roadways throughout Suffolk County and beyond.

The Long Island Expressway (I-495) services over one million (1,000,000) commuters on a daily basis. I've personally observed horrendous and extremely dangerous driving conditions, which undoubtedly cause flat tires, severe auto body damage as well as automobile accidents with personal injury. These incidents are absolutely avoidable and unnecessary for our families, friends, and tourists.

Experiencing a simple flat tire on any of these roadways presents a clear and present secondary danger when a driver needs to pull over to the shoulder to change a tire. Please, for a moment, envision a family out for a ride that experiences a flat tire on the LIE. They are forced to pull over to the side of the road, keep their family members a safe distance away from traffic while attempting to change a tire or await roadside assistance, while traffic flies by at 60 miles an hour and above. Of those approximately one million drivers, how many of them are preoccupied with

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their phones or GPS? Furthermore, how many drive recklessly, or well beyond the speed limit? A simple “flat tire” becomes a life threatening event for those experiencing this unfortunate situation.

On a personal note, on Sunday, May 2nd, while traveling eastbound on the LIE in Suffolk County, I witnessed a vehicle suddenly and abruptly swerve from the middle lane to the left lane in an attempt to avoid what can only be described as a “crater-sized” pothole, thus causing the driver in the left lane to swerve into the HOV lane, where a minivan carrying an entire family had to take evasive action by slamming on the brakes. This caused the original vehicle to veer into the left lane while sideways. I could actually see the children inside, and the expressions on their faces as their vehicle continued to veer right to left until coming to a stop. As a result, multiple vehicles including my own (with my two daughters as passengers) had to slam on our brakes to avoid a collision. Luckily and thanks be to God, there were no accidents or injuries in this situation.

This incident admittedly shook me to my core and upset my daughters considerably. I cannot help but think that if there was a tractor trailer, or some other type of heavy-weighted vehicle present at that precise moment, the outcome could have been much different. To think about this situation for the remainder of our trip home spurred a great deal of concern, anger and amazement of why this incident had occurred and how easily it could have been prevented.

The residents in Suffolk County, New York pay some of the highest taxes in the country and deserve better, safer and more secure roadways than those we are currently forced to utilize on a daily basis. The lives of hardworking commuters and family members should not be put in peril each and every time they use these roadways. Interstate I-495, Route 27 and Route 25 are major thoroughfares in and out of Suffolk County and are utilized by many tourists looking forward to vacations, holidays and family occasions here on Long Island. They should not be subject to these dangerous and quite frankly, atrociously embarrassing roadway conditions. With the summer months rapidly approaching, millions of additional drivers and families will be occupying these roadways. These trips should hold only wonderful memories and experiences for those who choose to come to Long Island and visit our beautiful eastern towns, beaches and wineries.

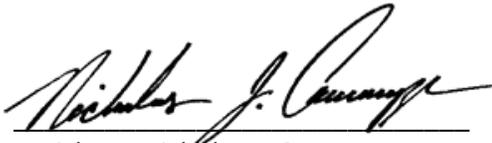
It is our understanding that repairs for these roadways are scheduled for completion by 2023-2024. This is completely unacceptable and a total disregard for the emergent state of repair needed on these roadways. At a time when NYS has received unprecedented levels of federal aid, much of it appropriated for economic development, and considering that infrastructure investment yields approximately \$7.00 for every \$1.00 invested, the time for immediate and decisive action must be now. We as public servants owe it to our constituents, fellow taxpayers and families to be proactive in this matter rather than reactive. In doing so, many unnecessary and unfortunate incidents can and will be avoided.

It is with this in mind that we, the members of the Suffolk County Legislature stand in unison and fully support the actions of all New York State representatives currently demanding and fighting for the much needed repairs to our roadways. We are hereby requesting that immediate and emergent action be taken to remedy the hazardous driving conditions on Interstate I-495, Route 27 and Route 25 in Suffolk County, New York. Until such action is taken, NYS should be held accountable and responsible for every flat tire, bent rim, automobile accident, injury or death caused by the current conditions of these roadways, with restitution given to those who have been made to endure conditions that can be likened to a war-torn country. We have an obligation to ensure the safety of our commuters, and should make every effort to begin to do so without any further delay!

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We thank you for taking the time to read this impassioned request on behalf of all residents of Suffolk County and to the millions of others who seek to visit and enjoy the beautiful resources we have to offer. Let's make their memories on Long Island joyful ones!

Very truly yours,



Legislator Nicholas J. Caracappa
LD #4



Kara Hahn, Deputy Presiding Officer
LD #5



Legislator Bridget Fleming
LD #2



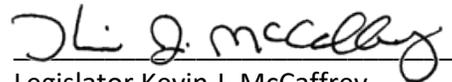
Legislator Anthony Piccirillo
LD #8



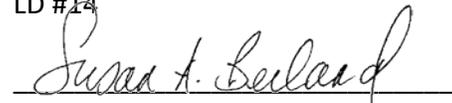
Legislator Thomas Cilmi
LD #10



Legislator Leslie Kennedy
LD #12



Legislator Kevin J. McCaffrey
LD #14



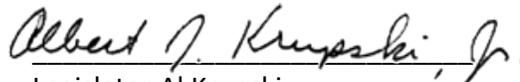
Legislator Susan A. Berland
LD #16



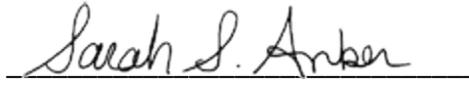
Legislator William Spencer
LD # 18



Robert Calarco, Presiding Officer
LD # 7



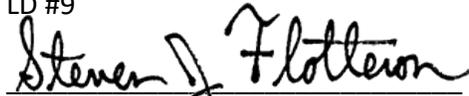
Legislator Al Krupski
LD #1



Legislator Sarah S. Anker
LD #6



Legislator Samuel Gonzalez
LD #9



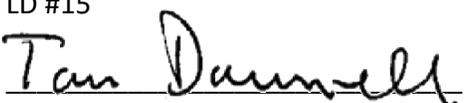
Legislator Steven J. Flotteron
LD #11



Legislator Robert Trotta
LD #13



Legislator Jason Richberg
LD #15



Legislator Tom Donnelly
LD #17

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CC:

The Honorable Charles Schumer, United States Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand, United States Senate
The Honorable Andrew Garbarino, United States House of Representatives
The Honorable Thomas Suozzi, United States House of Representatives
The Honorable Lee Zeldin, United States House of Representatives
The Honorable Phil Boyle, New York State Senate
The Honorable John E. Brooks, New York State Senate
The Honorable James Gaughran, New York State Senate
The Honorable Mario Mattera, New York State Senate
The Honorable Anthony H. Palumbo, New York State Senate
The Honorable Alexis Weik, New York State Senate
The Honorable Keith P. Brown, New York State Assembly
The Honorable Joseph DeStefano, New York State Assembly
The Honorable Michael Durso, New York State Assembly
The Honorable Steve Englebright, New York State Assembly
The Honorable Michael J. Fitzpatrick, New York State Assembly
The Honorable Jarett Gandolfo, New York State Assembly
The Honorable Jodi Giglio, New York State Assembly
The Honorable Kimberly Jean-Pierre, New York State Assembly
The Honorable Phil Ramos, New York State Assembly
The Honorable Steve Stern, New York State Assembly
The Honorable Douglas Smith, New York State Assembly
The Honorable Fred Thiele, New York State Assembly