



A Joint Statement on the Passing of Senator Frank Lautenberg

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As New Jerseyans consider the legislative legacy of Senator Frank Lautenberg, AARP New Jersey and the Tri-State Transportation Campaign note his strong leadership in enhancing the safety of our nation's roads for all who use them. Responding to the 1,000+ pedestrian fatalities in New Jersey over the past decade, Senator Lautenberg broke through partisan barriers to make safety a top priority in the Senate and move it into national prominence.

As Senate Transportation Subcommittee Chairman, Senator Lautenberg sponsored the Safe and Complete Streets Act of 2011 and shepherded passage of many of its important provisions through the Commerce Committee and the Senate. The measure aimed to ensure that all federally-funded street projects provide for the safe travel needs of all who are walking, bicycling, riding transit, or driving, regardless of age. This approach will save lives by making every project a safety project – so states and municipalities won't have to wait on special funding in this fiscally-constrained environment. While these provisions were not part of the final surface transportation legislation passed into law last year, Senator Lautenberg's leadership moved the issue to the forefront of Congressional deliberation on this life and death issue.

As Senator Lautenberg stated prior to the unanimous passage of the measure by the Commerce Committee, the safe streets initiative is particularly timely in light of the fatality and injury data released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration showing a sharp uptick in pedestrian injuries and fatalities.

Our organizations laud Senator Lautenberg's essential leadership in promoting transportation safety, and will urge leaders in New Jersey and across the country to help fill the significant void created by his passing.

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