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Contact:

Ryan Lynch
Tri-State Transportation Campaign
631-742-7528

ADVOCATES APPLAUD SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATORS FOR CREATING COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION FUND

HAUPPAUGE—Today, Suffolk County Legislators, led by Legislator Rob Calarco (D-Patchogue) and Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory (D-Amityville), adopted an amendment to the County's 2015-2017 Capital Program to establish a Complete Streets Implementation Fund. Beginning in 2016 and continuing each subsequent year, the amendment will provide a yearly allotment of \$250,000 to redesign the County's roadways to more safely accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit users and motorists. The fund will encourage more robust implementation of Suffolk County's Complete Streets Policy passed in December 2012.

Complete streets are designed with infrastructure such as continuous sidewalks, protected bike lanes, pedestrian safety islands and landscaped medians that calm fast moving traffic and provide safe transportation options for residents.

AARP, Tri-State Transportation Campaign, Vision Long Island and other safe streets advocates have been calling for the creation of such a fund since the County's Complete Streets policy was adopted a year and a half ago.

Roads in Suffolk County are some of the most dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists in the region. A Tri-State Transportation Campaign analysis found that 122 pedestrians were killed on roads in Suffolk County between 2010 and 2012, and according to Governor Andrew Cuomo's Traffic Safety Committee, 22 cyclists and 278 motorists and passengers were killed in Suffolk County during the same time period. There were also 90,000 crashes in Suffolk County, which resulted in 52,000 non-fatal injuries.

"This effort by Legislator Calarco and Suffolk County government is a great example of an action that a local community can take to be more age-friendly," said Will Stoner, AARP Long Island representative. "Once again Suffolk County legislators demonstrate national leadership on issues of safety, and access for mobility to all residents of our community."

County funding for walking and cycling infrastructure comes at a time when the New York State Department of Transportation and the federal government have cut funding. The current federal transportation bill, MAP-21, cut dedicated walking and biking infrastructure investment by 30 percent and according to the New York State Department of Transportation's 2014-2017 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), New York plans to spend only 0.98 percent of its transportation dollars, representing a reduction of more than \$100 million—or a 40 percent cut from 2011-2014 levels—on pedestrian and bicycling safety projects. In Region 10 on Long Island, planned spending on walking and biking projects will be cut by 24 percent over the next four years. The result is only 0.57 percent of the regional allocation of transportation dollars being spent on bicycle and pedestrian projects.

"The establishment of dedicated funding for safe walking and cycling infrastructure is an important step for Suffolk County as funding from New York State and the Federal government dwindles," said Ryan Lynch, associate director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, a non-profit policy watchdog that advocated for the funding pot. "County Legislator Rob Calarco and Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory have shown incredible leadership by advancing this funding."

This funding will provide resources to the Suffolk County Department of Public Works to redesign and retrofit existing roadways in the Suffolk County transportation system.

"We are happy to see Suffolk County provide dedicated funds for desperately-needed Complete Streets projects," said Vision Long Island Director Eric Alexander. "This is the type of initiative that is needed to move Suffolk DPW towards creating safer roadways for our region."

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