



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

New York State Senate Minority Leader Rob Ortt, Assemblyman Angelo Morinello and Superintendent Paul Casseri Urge Gov. Hochul, New York State Department of Transportation to Reconsider Decision on Traffic Light Outside of Lewiston-Porter CSD

ROBERT G. ORTT September 6, 2024

| ISSUE: **TRAFFIC SAFETY, SCHOOL SAFETY**



Senator Rob Ortt (R,C – North Tonawanda) speaking at Friday's press conference outside Lewiston-Porter CSD

Lewiston, NY – Today, standing outside the Lewiston-Porter High School campus, New York State Senate Minority Leader Rob Ortt, along with Assemblyman Angelo Morinello and

Superintendent Paul Casseri called on Gov. Kathy Hochul and the New York State Department of Transportation to reconsider their decision not to install a traffic light outside the school.

In January of 2023, the DOT communicated with the school district its findings that the intersection of the main school driveway and Route 18 did not meet the criteria for a traditional three-way traffic signal – or any measure of engineered traffic intervention whatsoever.

Since then, school administrators, staff and community members have witnessed countless “near-misses” at the intersection.

“The data from the traffic study may not meet the criteria set forth by DOT regulations to install a signal, but these studies rely on traffic data and do not account for the lack of experience of young, new drivers, or account for when traffic flow is heaviest during the school’s opening and closing,” **said Senator Rob Ortt**. “Numbers on a sheet of paper may say one thing, but the stories being told by those who work in this vicinity every day are saying something very different. It is best to act now to avoid any future tragedies – so often in government we do things as a reaction instead of working to prevent issues from occurring in the first place.”

Since the initial study, Sen. Ortt and Assemblyman Morinello have worked with the school district to call for a reconsideration to the DOT’s original findings only for the department to reference back to its 2022 study.

“Safety should always be the number one priority,” said Assemblyman Angelo Morinello. “It is better to be over-precautious than under-prepared. During the opening and closing of school each day, young new drivers fill the roadway in a short period of time which can lead

to congestion and accidents. One too many “close calls” means it is time to act and improve safety.”

“Student and staff safety is critical. Putting a traffic light at the intersection of the high school entrance and a state highway is a simple, proactive, common-sense response to a clear and present problem. A blinking yellow light that is activated at peak traffic times and events is the solution. That is all we are asking,” said Lewiston-Porter Central School District Superintendent Paul Casseri.