



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo Wants Highway Project to Move Forward

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO June 23, 2009

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Griffo Calls For Action To Build Rooftop Highway Across North Country

(Albany) Senator Joseph A. Griffo (R,I,C -Rome) today announced that he has urged Governor David Paterson to move forward as quickly as possible to use the unique opportunity created by federal stimulus money to implement plans to construct a Rooftop Highway across Northern New York that would offer much-needed connections between Interstates 81 and 87.

"In a society where distance is measured more by time than by miles, the long-proposed Rooftop Highway – which will provide high-speed linkages among Lewis and St. Lawrence County communities and connections linking Interstates 81 and 87 -- is essential. Existing roads have been inadequate for 20 years. If we truly want to use New York State's once-in-a-lifetime federal stimulus funding to transform the economy, this project should be taken off the drawing board and put into construction," Griffo wrote Paterson . " The current major highways running east and west are not suited for modern traffic. Both U.S. 11 and State Route 37 are only two lanes wide. There is no four-lane highway to move goods, and people. This inhibits economic expansion and development. Failure to move forward on the Rooftop Highway project means that the status quo – which has not been good enough for 10 years – is going to remain for the foreseeable future.

In conclusion, Griffo urged Paterson : "I believe that there is a major public policy imperative to allow growth to take place in all parts of the state, and that investing in the transportation infrastructure is the critical first step to that investment for the communities to be served by the Rooftop Highway . This is a project that can lead to economic and community transformation, and one that should be funded through New York's federal stimulus project dollars."

[Text of letter follows]

Governor David Paterson

State Capitol

Albany , NY 13224

Dear Governor Paterson,

In a society where distance is measured more by time than by miles, the long-proposed Rooftop Highway – which will provide high-speed linkages among Lewis and St. Lawrence County communities and connections linking Interstates 81 and 87 -- is essential. Existing roads have been inadequate for 20 years. If we truly want to use New York State's once-in-a-lifetime federal stimulus funding to transform the economy, this project should be taken off the drawing board and put into construction.

Although the project is a major undertaking, it requires just such a major step to address the system problems of a region defined in a New York Times article 10 years ago this way: "along the state's geographic and economic fringes, passing through areas where unemployment is high, real estate values and per capita incomes are low, and communities are small and sparsely populated." It is a reflection of the concerns of the people of this region that comments from a 10-year-old article can remain relevant to discussing the region today.

The current major highways running east and west are not suited for modern traffic. Both U.S. 11 and State Route 37 are only two lanes wide. There is no four-lane highway to move goods, and people. This inhibits economic expansion and development. Failure to move forward on the Rooftop Highway project means that the status quo – which has not been good enough for 10 years – is going to remain for the foreseeable future.

I believe that there is a major public policy imperative to allow growth to take place in all parts of the state, and that investing in the transportation infrastructure is the critical first step to that investment for the communities to be served by the Rooftop Highway . This is a project that can lead to economic and community transformation, and one that should be funded through New York's federal stimulus project dollars.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Griffo

Senator