



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Hugh T. Farley

Senator Farley Joins Edinburg Residents at Bridge Rally at State Capitol

HUGH T. FARLEY November 12, 2009

| ISSUE: [TRANSPORTATION](#)



State Senator Hugh T. Farley (R, C, I - Schenectady) on November 10th joined dozens of local officials and community members from Crown Point, Essex County and Edinburg, Saratoga County to rally support for critically important investments in bridge and roadway projects.

Senator Farley and his colleagues said there are 110 New York State bridges with a safety rating the same or worse than the bridge in Crown Point now deemed too dangerous for

traffic, according to a New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) bridge safety report issued in May. DOT' 2010-2015 Capital Program Proposal indicates that without significant investment 1,526 bridges will become deficient over the next five years.

"We have continued to call for prompt action to secure the additional funding needed to replace the aging Batchellerville Bridge," said Senator Farley. "The bridge plays a crucial role in the regional economy and in the lives of full-time and seasonal residents. The current restrictions on the bridge, not to mention the threat of future closure, present serious public safety concerns. The time to address this situation is now, rather than having to react to the traumatic impact of a closure, like in the Crown Point situation. Both of these bridges are indicative of the broader problems that need to be addressed throughout the State."

The Democrat-led Assembly and Senate approved a capital plan for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) this past May while refusing to address the deteriorating condition of New York' roads and bridges. Capital plans for mass transit and roads and bridges have historically been approved at the same time.

A DOT report issued this past May listed hundreds of bridges in need of attention. The Crown Point Bridge, also known as the Lake Champlain Bridge, had a safety rating of 3.38. More than 100 bridges received a lower score in that report.

The Batchellerville Bridge, built in 1930 and last inspected by DOT in August 2008, has a safety rating of 3.35 out of 7.00. The 3,000-foot span has been reduced to one-way traffic.

1 "The future -- should the Batchellerville bridge not be repaired or replaced and ends up getting shut down as did Crown Point -- you have cut off the residents of the entire south shore and all roads off from South Shore, from all municipal facilities, including schools, landfill, town offices and road maintenance, all of which we pay taxes to support," said Paula

Blackwell, a member of The Bridge of Life Committee. "The major effect right now is on the fire department is the weight restriction. We cannot cross the bridge with our tanker loaded, nor can we get water from the closest fire company, because their tankers are too heavy. Should the bridge close our problems become multiplied because first response will be from neighboring companies 20 to 30 minutes away. In the case of a structure fire, stroke, heart attack, entrapment or other emergency, every minute counts."

Last month, the New York State Department of Transportation announced its proposed five-year 2010-2015 capital transportation program, which was almost immediately rejected by Governor David Paterson. The lawmakers said despite the state' fiscal crisis, priorities such as addressing deteriorating infrastructure need to be addressed for public safety.