



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Sen. Fuschillo Thanks Scarpati Family and Gov. Paterson for making Wantagh Bike Path Safer

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. June 6, 2010

| ISSUE: **HIGHWAYS**

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (8th Senate District) today joined in a ribbon cutting ceremony with Lynn and Jim Scarpati and Governor David Paterson to launch the construction of the Wantagh Parkway guard rail project.

One year ago, the Scarpati's 19 year-old son Matthew, an avid bicyclist, was repairing a flat tire on the bike path when a drunken motorcyclist lost control and tragically took his life.

Hundreds showed up at the ceremony today to kick off a bike ride in Matthew's honor, but it was thousands who signed petitions, Facebook pages and contacted local officials.

Immediately after the accident, Senator Fuschillo and Assemblyman David McDonough (R-No. Merrick) met with the Scarpati family in the Senator's office and vowed their support.

Senator Fuschillo made an immediate phone call to Governor Paterson's office and arranged for a private meeting with him and the Scarpati's so he could hear first-hand the need for the guard rail to prevent further death or injury.

"I join with the Scarpati family in thanking Governor Paterson for making this project a reality," Senator Fuschillo said. "It's a bittersweet day for the Scarpati family but countless

people will be forever grateful for their commitment to making the bike path safer.”

“Although this guard rail will never bring my son back, I know it will save lives,” Lynn Scarpati said.

Senator Fuschillo also praised the efforts of many others who contacted his office and used social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter to keep attention to the need for the project.

“Matt enjoyed fitness and bicycling to stay healthy yet his life was taken in such a tragic way” Assemblyman McDonough said. “He will be forever missed by his family and friends, but because of their work in his name, lives will be saved.”

A bicycle that was painted entirely in white was presented at the ceremony by Matt’s former biking partner and best friend. A ‘ghost bike,’ as it’s called, with Matthew Sarpati’s name, is a custom among bicyclists to leave at the site where a fellow rider was killed to bring attention for safe roads.

-###-