



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

## Senator Fuschillo Joins WITH Supervisor Bellone & Other Local Officials in Unveiling Regional Transportation and Development Plan

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR.    October 7, 2011

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*Plan Calls for Bus Rapid Transit to Ease Congestion and Improve Access to Route 110 Corridor*

*Photo caption: Senator Fuschillo speaks about the benefits of Bus Rapid Transit along the Route 110 Corridor as part of the Connect Long Island plan.*

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) recently joined with Babylon Town Supervisor Steve Bellone, Huntington Town Supervisor Frank Petrone, Farmingdale Mayor Butch Starkie, and other local officials in unveiling Connect Long Island: A Regional Transportation and Development Plan.

The plan focuses on supporting existing and proposed transit oriented developments and downtown revitalizations in a number of different communities, including Farmingdale and East Farmingdale, creating Bus Rapid Transit service along the Route 110 corridor, and tying these projects together by expanding mass transit service with the much-needed second track to increase LIRR service between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma. The plan aims to tie these projects, many of which were conceived independently of each other, together by coordinating efforts on a regional basis.

“In today’s economy, we need to do everything we can to create jobs, help businesses grow, and promote economic development. That’s exactly what these projects would do. Transit Oriented Development will help attract people to live, work, and shop in our downtowns, creating a huge boost to small businesses. Expanding mass transit service will improve access to these developments, as well as the vitally important Route 110 Corridor, while easing congestion and taking cars off the road. These are exactly the type of smart growth initiatives we should be exploring to help ensure that Long Island’s economy can grow and create jobs,” said Senator Fuschillo.

“Long Island faces many challenges moving forward, and we need to take a regional approach to deal with them,” said Supervisor Bellone. “By developing along rail lines and connecting these developments to major job centers, we are opening up new opportunities for people to live and work on Long Island without getting in their cars for everything.”

One of the key components of the Connect Long Island plan is Bus Rapid Transit along the Route 110 Corridor. The Corridor is home to 135,000 jobs, 20% of Suffolk County's workforce, but it also one of Long Island's most heavily congested roads. The Route 110 Bus Rapid Transit System would be Long Island's first north-south mass transit connection and would greatly improve access to the area, creating new opportunities while also easing traffic congestion. Senator Fuschillo secured state funding for the Towns of Babylon and Huntington to conduct a study which determined that Bus Rapid Transit is feasible for the area.

The plan also calls for a second track on the LIRR's Ronkonkoma branch line between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma. The line, which is the LIRR's most crowded line, currently operates on a single track. Adding a second track would allow for increased capacity and more frequent connections to Transit Oriented Developments along the line.

"Two years ago, we commissioned a feasibility study on a bus rapid transit system because we saw its potential as the crucial link among the many developing commercial, educational, and residential facilities along Route 110. Now that the study has confirmed our belief, it is time to move ahead with this project, which will spur job creation and improve the environment by reducing automobile traffic along Route 110, the area we call Long Island's epicenter," said Supervisor Petrone.

"It is incredibly important that we erase the boundary lines between towns, villages, and counties when doing comprehensive planning," said Mayor Starkie. "We need to work together on these transformative projects like the 110 Corridor. I fully support the redevelopment of the East Farmingdale Train Station, second track to Ronkonkoma and a bus rapid transit system on 110. This game changing plan will be a huge benefit to the Village of Farmingdale and surrounding communities in the years to come."