



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senators Fuschillo & Golden Renew Call for Law Allowing New York State to Use Public-Private Partnerships in Funding Road & Bridge Projects

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. November 30, 2011

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Abandonment of BQE & Gowanus Expressway Improvement Plans Because of Funding Issues Highlights Need for Law

Following news that improvement plans to the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway and Gowanus Expressway have been abandoned because of funding issues, Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) and Senator Marty Golden (R-Brooklyn) are renewing their call for a law allowing New York State to utilize public-private partnerships (P3) to help finance and deliver road & bridge improvement projects.

“Abandoning these plans highlights a growing problem; current funding sources are not keeping pace with our growing infrastructure needs. We need to explore other avenues to advance projects. P3s have helped other states utilize new capital sources to repair and improve their infrastructure. With New York State continuing to face financial difficulties, this is an option which could help the state move forward with critical projects, create jobs for residents, and promote economic development. That’s why the Legislature needs to approve this bill,” said Senator Fuschillo, Chairman of the Senate’s Transportation Committee.

“Modernizing the 1.5 mile Atlantic Avenue to Sands Street stretch of the BQE is a crucial element in completing the overall BQE improvement program which began almost twenty years ago. Abandoning its rehabilitation is totally unacceptable. Enacting the legislation I am sponsoring with Senator Fuschillo would have provided a new option in funding and in all likelihood allowed this necessary project to go forward. We must learn from this failure and pass this bill immediately,” said Senator Golden.

According to media reports, state transportation officials announced that they are abandoning plans to improve portions of both the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway and the Gowanus Expressway because of lack of funding. The funding difficulties come at a time when the state is in the process of preparing a multi-year road and bridge capital plan to address its growing infrastructure crisis. Nearly 6,200 of New York’s 17,400 state and local highway bridges are either structurally deficient or functionally obsolete, according to the State Department of Transportation.

P3s enable governments to partner with the private sector to finance and deliver infrastructure projects. Given the private sector’s vested financial interest in completing projects on-time and under-budget, P3s often perform more efficiently than their counterparts and save money.

Senator Fuschillo is sponsoring legislation (S5445) with Senator Golden to give New York State the flexibility to enter into P3 agreements to finance and deliver transportation infrastructure projects. 31 other states and Puerto Rico have similar laws.

Utilizing P3s to get infrastructure projects moving would also bring tremendous economic benefits at a time when over 737,000 New Yorkers are unemployed. The U.S. Department of Transportation estimates that 25,000 jobs are created for every \$1 billion spent on transportation infrastructure projects.

P3s have helped finance projects in New York before, including at Kennedy Airport and Grand Central Terminal. In addition, New York's Commission on State Asset Maximization previously recommended the Gowanus Expressway as a potential P3 project.

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