



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Cortland County Bridge Project Can Wait Until After Fall Harvest

JAMES L. SEWARD September 5, 2012

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CORTLAND, 09/05/12 – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I–Oneonta) and Assemblyman Gary D. Finch (R/C/I – Springport) are calling on the New York State Department of Transportation to delay the start of bridge construction on State Route 281 in Homer.

**“The bridge reconstruction is vital but the timing is a major obstacle,”** said Senator Seward. **“Our farmers deal with enough hardships without forcing them to navigate through a major, costly detour during the busy fall harvest season.”**

The Route 281 bridge project was initially scheduled to begin in the spring of 2012 and was later rescheduled for this fall. This has created a financial hardship for several businesses located in Homer with an estimated loss of up to half a million dollars over the next three months.

“Along with disrupting our local farmers, the construction at this time will mean heavy truck traffic through Homer – a problem that could be minimized with a later start date,” said Assemblyman Finch.

In a joint letter to NYSDOT Commissioner Joan McDonald, Senator Seward and Assemblyman Finch illustrate their concern and offer a solution:

*“Hundreds of trucks transporting harvested crops over hundreds of additional miles will be forced to drive through the Village of Homer, New York creating disruption and additional costs. In addition, 1.5 million gallons of liquid manure will have to be transported through the densely populated village.*

*“We are requesting a 60 day postponement of the project which would allow these effected businesses to complete most of their harvesting practices.”*

Senator Seward and Assemblyman Finch have consulted with Town of Homer Supervisor Fred Forbes and Village of Homer Mayor Genevieve Suites who agree the 60 day postponement is appropriate.

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The complete letter to NYSDOT Commissioner Joan McDonald is attached.