



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

## Route 8 Traffic Study Needed

JAMES L. SEWARD June 24, 2013

| ISSUE: **TRANSPORTATION, HIGHWAYS**

**ONEONTA, 06/24/13** – State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) today announced his strong support for a full New York State Department of Transportation study of traffic safety issues along New York State Route 8 in Chenango County approaching the Chobani plant.

**“A number of constituents have contacted my office in regard to a recent spike in truck traffic and several related accidents along State Route 8 near the Chobani plant,”** said Senator Seward. **“It seems there are multiple factors at work, and a full scale DOT study is needed to get to the root of the problem and develop an effective strategy that will best address this growing safety concern.”**

In a letter to Department of Transportation Commissioner Joan McDonald, Senator Seward writes:

*“Chobani is a terrific asset, employing thousands of individuals and producing a healthy product that has provided our local dairy farmers with a new and expanding market. The company also donates to many local charities, and its employees give back by volunteering at community events. I want to see the company continue to grow locally and prosper. Safe highways are vital for the company’s future and the wellbeing of all motorists as well as the residents who live and travel along this stretch of highway.”*

Senator Seward will be taking part in a meeting on June 25<sup>th</sup> to discuss the traffic issues on State Route 8. Representatives from the Otsego County and Chenango County planning departments, New York State Police, New York State Department of Transportation, and Chobani are scheduled to be in attendance.

**“I am confident that bringing the parties together, in conjunction with a full DOT review, will help outline the situation and assist in developing a comprehensive strategy that will result in a safer stretch of State Route 8,”** Seward concluded.

*The complete letter from Senator Seward is below.*

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

I am writing to voice my concern and request your assistance regarding a developing traffic problem along New York State Route 8 in Chenango County and, in particular, between South New Berlin and South Edmeston.

The highway has seen a significant spike in truck traffic due to the extremely successful Chobani yogurt factory located in South Edmeston. Many of the truck drivers who transport products to and from the plant may be unfamiliar with the area and the highway, which can be challenging. As a result, a number of accidents have been reported in recent months.

I understand that the New York State Police have increased their presence on the highway, and that is a great start. Additionally, I am respectfully requesting a full DOT study to review traffic patterns, pinpoint trouble spots and develop a measured response plan that will ensure the safety of all motorists.

Chobani is a terrific asset, employing thousands of individuals and producing a healthy product that has provided our local dairy farmers with a new and expanding market. The company also donates to many local charities, and its employees give back by volunteering at community events. I want to see the company continue to grow locally and prosper. Safe highways are vital for the company's future and the wellbeing of all motorists as well as the residents who live and travel along this stretch of highway.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**JAMES L. SEWARD**

*State Senator*

