



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

O'Mara, Palmesano say new state budget continues last year's increased state support for local roads and bridges, provides additional help for winter-damaged roads

THOMAS F. O'MARA March 31, 2014

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**Albany, N.Y., March 31**—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R-C, Big Flats) and Assemblyman Phil Palmesano (R-C, Corning) said today that area counties will see increases in state Consolidated Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) funding under the 2014-15 New York State budget being enacted today.

In early March, O'Mara, Palmesano and a bipartisan group of nearly 100 legislative colleagues joined county and town highway superintendents and other local leaders from throughout the state to call for increased support for local roads and bridges. They noted that local

roads and bridges account for 87% of the roads, 52% of the bridges, and 48% of the vehicle mileage logged in New York State.

CHIPS provides the bulk of state aid to counties and towns for the maintenance and improvement of local roads and bridges.

Following a similar bipartisan effort led by O'Mara and Palmesano last year, the 2013-14 state budget provided a \$75-million increase in CHIPS funding to an overall level of \$438.1 million. It represented the first funding increase for the program in five years. [[watch comments on the Senate floor earlier today recognizing Senator O'Mara's leadership](#)]

O'Mara and Palmesano said that CHIPS funding in 2014-15 will be continued at last year's increased funding level, \$438.1 million, but an additional \$40 million will be distributed through the CHIPS program to local governments to fix surface road damage, including potholes, created by this year's extreme winter.

"We're continuing last year's increased state support for local roads and bridges and we've secured some additional funding to help our local highway departments deal with the damage from this year's extremely tough winter. This continued recognition of the importance of CHIPS funding will make a significant difference for localities, local economies and motorist safety statewide," O'Mara and Palmesano said in a joint statement. "The improvement and upkeep of local roads and bridges is a wise use of taxpayer dollars. It's an investment in economic growth and job creation throughout the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions, and all across New York."