



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James L. Seward

I-88 Rest Stop In Worcester To Reopen

JAMES L. SEWARD November 14, 2014

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ONEONTA, 11/14/14 -- State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I – Oneonta) today announced that the NYSDOT rest area along I-88 eastbound between exits 18 and 19 in Worcester is set to reopen by November 21.

“With the holiday travel season now upon us, I am extremely pleased that this rest stop, a critical component for highway safety, is set to reopen,” said Senator Seward. **“I fought against the NYSDOT decision to shutter this and other rest areas four years ago, and reopening the site was among my top priorities this year.”**

In 2010, the New York State Department of Transportation closed six rest areas on interstate highways in what was touted as a temporary measure. To date, only the Worcester rest stop is scheduled to reopen.

“When the closures were first announced, I voiced my concern, particularly for the safety of truck drivers who make their living and support their families traveling our highways. Since that time a host of serious accidents involving tractor trailers have occurred near the Worcester rest stop. No doubt some of these crashes could have been avoided if a safe haven was open,” Seward added.

Worcester Fire Chief Jim Empie said, “While many people may not realize it, the Worcester rest stop and others like it can mean the difference between life and death. Senator Seward really came through for motorists and local emergency workers.”

President of the New York State Motor Truck Association Kendra Hems said, "Senator Seward is to be commended for continuing to fight for the reopening of the Worcester rest area. Reopening the other five rest areas, so truck drivers who must take time off during their shifts have a safe place to park, remains a priority."

Senator Seward also advocated for budget funds to reopen the I-88 Wells Bridge rest stop (westbound between exits 11 and 12) which was also closed in 2010.

"While the Wells Bridge rest stop was not specifically funded in this year's state budget, I will continue to advocate for its reopening as well. In this day and age, when so much attention is focused on 'texting zones' and similar measures, we need to enhance highway safety not reduce it," Seward concluded.

The Worcester rest area will be open for parking only at this time. Renovation work on the restrooms is still being completed with a 2015 opening planned.