



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Murphy gets railway safety back on track

TERRENCE P. MURPHY June 19, 2015

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ALBANY, NY - Following the horrific Metro North train accident in February, Senator Terrence Murphy, who represents the area of Valhalla where the accident occurred, vowed to address the need for increased safety measures to protect local commuters and community members. Thursday, the New York State Senate passed legislation, authored by Senator Murphy, which would allow local municipalities to install traffic cameras at local grade crossings to better monitor traffic at these dangerous transportation intersections.

"This was a collaborative effort with our local officials in an effort to provide them with

additional tools to improve the safety of our local roads where they intersect with dangers grade crossings," Senator Murphy said. "Under this provision, our local towns would be able to install traffic cameras to ensure motorists and our trains are following the law."

On February 3rd, Train 659 collided with an SUV at the Commerce Street grade crossing in Valhalla, causing the death of five commuters and one motorist who was trapped on the grade crossing. The northbound train's scheduled stops were all in the 40th Senate District.

Since the accident, greater focus has been given to improving the safety of the grade crossings throughout the state, including the allocation of of nearly \$300 million by the federal government in an effort to eliminate these dangerous crossings.

Hudson Valley Senator Bill Larkin said, "I am proud to have co-sponsored this important piece of legislation. Senator Murphy's leadership on this issue helped make the passage of this bill a reality. If this bill is signed into law, I strongly believe it has the potential to save lives."

New Castle Supervisor Rob Greenstein said, "The passage of this legislation will dramatically increase compliance and enforcement of our railroad crossing safety laws. I welcome any and all technology that would increase the safety of our roads and railways. I applaud Senator Murphy for carrying this through the Senate on our behalf and look forward to our continued work together."

Mount Pleasant Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi said, "Senator Murphy has recognized serious railway safety issues we face in local government and has made securing or eliminating grade crossings a priority. We are thankful that due to Senator Murphy's leadership, the State is stepping up to the plate here and his efforts to make us safer will save lives."

Assemblyman Tom Abinanti has sponsored this bill in the Assembly where it awaits approval. A second bill authored by he and Senator Murphy, which has made its way through Senate Committees and is currently on the calendar awaiting a vote, would require Metro North to issue recorded safety briefings at the departure of each train and periodically thereafter.