



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose Peralta

## Senator Jose Peralta, Make Queens Safer and advocates push for road safety measures on Roosevelt Avenue

JOSE PERALTA November 16, 2015

State Senator Jose Peralta (D-East Elmhurst), Make Queens Safer and community leaders today urged the City's Department of Transportation to design a new configuration on and around the dangerous intersections of 90<sup>th</sup> Street, Roosevelt Avenue and Elmhurst Avenue, in Jackson Heights. Since 2013, two area residents were fatally struck by vehicles, and at least another 10 pedestrians were injured. The latest accident with a pedestrian injury occurred on Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>.

Senator Peralta said the overhaul of intersections in the area should be part of Mayor Bill de Blasio's Vision Zero Action Plan, an initiative that seeks to end traffic fatalities in New York City. The appeal comes amid a surge of fatal accidents citywide in which 12 New Yorkers have lost their lives since October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Deputy Inspector Brian Hennessy, Commanding Officer of the 115<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct, which covers the area in conjunction with the 110<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct, was present at the Senator's press conference.

"These intersections cry for a complete redesign," **said Senator Peralta.** "Most of the accidents in this area are preventable, and with a new configuration and more police enforcement, I am positive we can drastically reduce pedestrian injuries and fatalities."

Senator Peralta specifically noted that the intersections in most need of reform are 90<sup>th</sup> Street and Roosevelt Avenue, Elmhurst Avenue and Roosevelt Avenue, and Case Street and Roosevelt Avenue. “There is a lot of foot and vehicular traffic in this particular area. There are a few schools. We need to do everything that it is in our power to protect New Yorkers, and redesigning this area will go a long way towards achieving that goal.”

Senator Peralta requested that the DOT complete a traffic study in the area in 2013 amid complaints from pedestrians and constituents. He also noted that drivers make illegal left turns at 90<sup>th</sup> Street and Roosevelt Avenue, causing some of the accidents. Peralta stated further that the solution to improve road and street safety should include street lights, more traffic signs, public education campaigns and better lighting, especially under the elevated tracks of the 7 subway line. “We all need to be part of the solution to improve road and street safety,” he said.

This year, in the area of 90<sup>th</sup> Street and Roosevelt Avenue, there were at least ten accidents reported, with two pedestrians and two cyclists injured.

**Cristina Furlong**, founding member of Make Queens Safer, an organization that works for pedestrian safety noted, “Within a half mile of the intersection of 90th and Roosevelt there are over 5,000 school children at just four schools. Their safety as well as that of their caregivers is the number one reason to improve the traffic environment on Roosevelt Avenue. Senator Peralta has championed the safety of school kids through persistence in getting crossing guards and other safety measures in his district. Enforcement, better lighting and traffic design are needed as well as education for cyclists, drivers and pedestrians. We are pleased to support these recent efforts to reduce traffic injuries and fatalities in this vibrant community.”

“We have seen tragedies from our office,” said **Joanne Econopouly**, from Cosmos Eye Care, an eyeglass shop located at 90<sup>th</sup> Street and Roosevelt Avenue. “We see cars making the illegal left turn all the time, and the triangle (Elmhurst Avenue, Roosevelt Avenue and Case Street) is not adequate for pedestrians to cross safely.”

“Clearly, something must be done in this area,” said long-time Jackson Heights resident **Rocío Molina**, who suffered a fractured ankle when she was injured in a car accident at 90th Street and Roosevelt Avenue. “Some drivers ignore street signs and they don’t yield to pedestrians,” she said.

“We see traffic accidents here all the time,” said **Agustín Rojas**, community leader and manager at a local pharmacy. “I want to thank Senator Peralta for taking the lead on this important issue for the community and the safety of pedestrians.”

Senator Peralta noted that Sunday, November 15th, is World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. It is a day to remember all those killed and injured on the roads across the world.