



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Murphy leads coalition call for expedited grade crossing assessments

TERRENCE MURPHY December 17, 2015

Image not found or type unknown



VALHALLA, NY - Of the 437 grade crossings in the New York metropolitan area, State Senator Terrence Murphy is leading a bipartisan coalition of local elected officials who have identified three crossings in Westchester County that they believe need immediate attention by the MTA. Penning a letter to MTA Chairman Tom Prendergast, Murphy, along with Mt. Pleasant Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi and New Castle Supervisor Rob Greenstein, requested the

Cleveland Street and Commerce Street grade crossings in Valhalla, as well as the Roaring Brook Road grade crossing in Chappaqua, receive priority attention.

"Following the horrific accident in February it became abundantly clear that grade crossing safety needed to be addressed," Senator Murphy said. "Now that the MTA has committed to assessing the hundreds of crossings in the area we believe these three need to be at the top of the list as they pose serious safety concerns. I am proud to join the leaders of our local communities to address this important issue and implore the MTA to expedite their analysis so we can take whatever action is needed to ensure our residents come home safely."

As the letter explains, the Cleveland Street crossing sits adjacent to the Valhalla train station and the Commerce Street crossing was the site of the February 3rd accident which claimed six lives. In addition, the Roaring Brook Road crossing is located less than a half mile from the Horace Greeley High School putting parents and young drivers at risk every day.

"The MTA and State must do everything possible to avoid another accident like we had here in February," Mt. Pleasant Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi said. "We are anticipating a report from our town engineer relating to the crossings in the coming days. My early impression is that these crossings will be recommended for closure and it would be irresponsible for me not to petition the necessary entities for closure. There is a process to accomplish this and having the MTA's review happen sooner than later would move that process along."

On Wednesday the National Transportation Safety Board released more than 1,100 documents pertaining to the fatal accident which occurred on February 3rd. In addition, MTA Chairman Tom Prednargast has announced that grade crossings are a priority for the authority and they plan on analyzing all 437.

"Every day, members of our community leave their homes to embark on what should always be a safe commute to work with an uneventful return home," New Castle Supervisor Rob

Greenstein said. "Unfortunately on February 3rd, two members of our community did not return home. In the aftermath of the tragic Metro North accident, the need to eliminate dangerous train crossings became clear. However, when the railroad grade crossing is located within a half mile of a high school with a large percentage of young and relatively inexperienced drivers the need becomes urgent. We thank Senator Murphy for his leadership on this critical public safety initiative. We must prevent another tragedy from happening."