



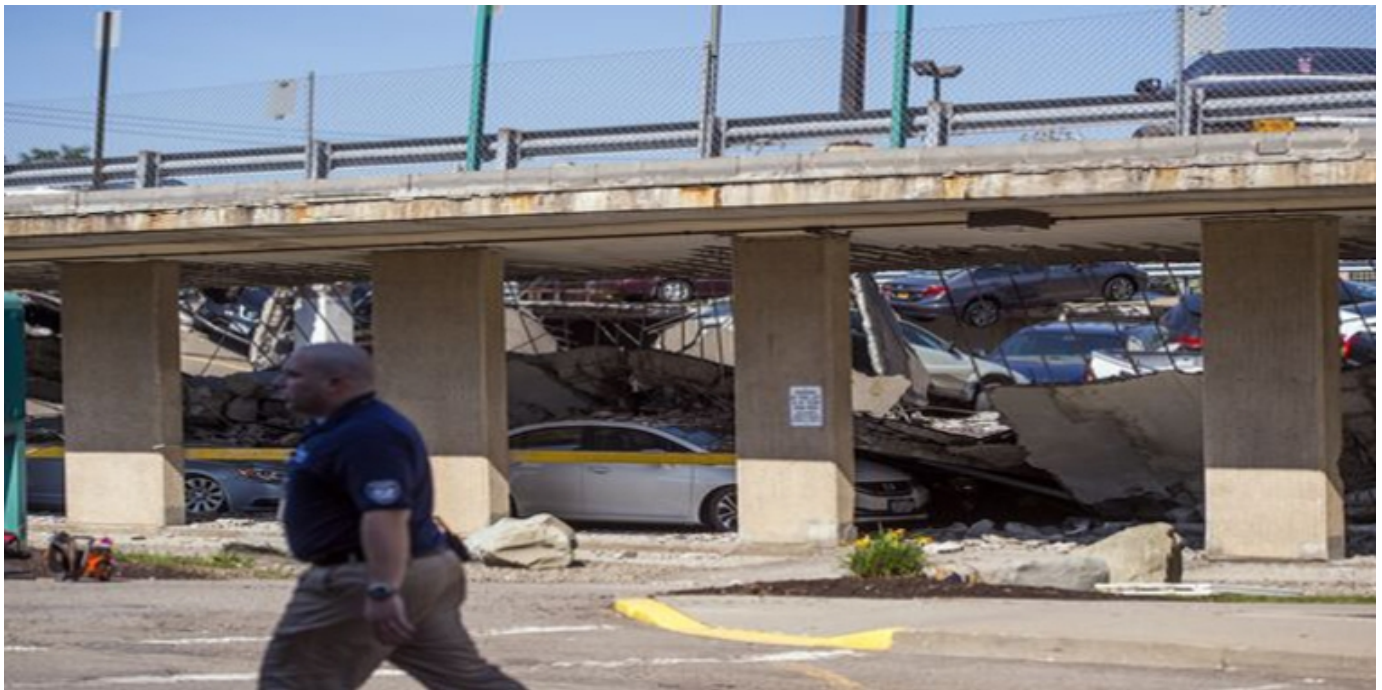
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

## O'Mara and Lupardo urge state to strengthen parking garage safety inspections (UPDATED)

THOMAS F. O'MARA January 23, 2017

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**Albany, N.Y., January 23**—The New York Department of State (DOS) will issue regulations for the regular structural inspections of parking garages across the state. This action was agreed upon today during a morning hearing of the State Fire Prevention and Building Code

Council where State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) and Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo (D-Endwell) testified and urged that the enhanced regulations be put in place.

Last year, both houses of the state Legislature overwhelmingly approved legislation sponsored by O'Mara and Lupardo (**S7669/A9614**) that would have required periodic inspections of New York's parking garages by licensed professional engineers, the first such legislation in the country. They introduced their legislation following the partial collapse of the parking garage at the UHS Medical Center in Johnson City in the summer of 2015.

Following that incident, additional garages in Binghamton and Ithaca were closed due to structural safety concerns. Last November, **Governor Andrew Cuomo vetoed the O'Mara-Lupardo legislation** but signaled in his veto message that he intended to work with them to put in place regulations to achieve their goal of enhanced parking garage safety statewide.

O'Mara and Lupardo praised this morning's action.

O'Mara, who was recently appointed Vice-Chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, said, "We appreciated this opportunity to continue working with the Cuomo administration and providing input that we believe is critical to moving forward on this public safety priority. Aging infrastructure needs to be regularly inspected and we're pleased that the Council shares our goal and supports that the Department of State issue new regulations to provide the effective oversight that's needed. This commonsense safety strategy has been lacking in New York State when it comes to parking ramps."

Lupardo said, "These regulations will offer protection to motorists and their vehicles across the state. After the collapse and closure of parking garages in our community, we all were surprised to learn there were no state or federal requirements for regular structural stability inspections of parking ramps; the new regulations are a necessary step to protect New Yorkers and provide national leadership on what is becoming an important public safety

issue.”

During this morning’s meeting, the DOS presented its plans for drafting regulations for regular structural inspections of parking structures. The Code Council was supportive of the DOS initiative and praised the efforts by O’Mara and Lupardo to implement an inspection program. DOS will now begin work on drafting the regulations, which will then be subject to public comment. DOS proposed enhancing the current requirements for fire and general safety inspections by code enforcement officials to include structural stability inspections.

[UPDATE: Read more from *Gannett News*, "**NY rewriting rules for parking ramp safety**"]