



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Ortt, Walter, and Morinello Call for Local Control of Speed Limits

ROBERT G. ORTT | October 25, 2017

| ISSUE: **LOCAL CONTROL, PUBLIC SAFETY, REGULATORY REFORM**



Pendleton – State Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I - North Tonawanda) today joined Assemblyman Ray Walter (R,C,I- Amherst) and Assemblyman Angelo Morinello (R,C,I,Ref - Niagara Falls) in calling for local control of speed limits. The state representatives recently introduced legislation to address concerns expressed by local officials and members of the community. They cited safety as well as a cumbersome state process as they argued for allowing counties to establish school speed zones.

State Senator Rob Ortt said: “We’ve reached a sort of critical mass on this issue and the mentality of ‘but we’ve always done it this way’ is simply not acceptable anymore. When we have local residents and officials all pointing to the same safety issues along a particular stretch in front of a school, there’s no reason local government shouldn’t be able to act.”

Assemblyman Ray Walter said: “I am proud to lend my support to this bill, which will allow municipalities to amend state speed limits in school zones and keep our children safe,” said Assemblyman Ray Walter. “Protecting Western New York’s families is, and will remain, a top priority for me in the state Assembly, and I will continue working to further legislation which empowers our local governments to ensure the well-being of our communities.”

Assemblyman Angelo Morinello said: “Returning local control of speed limits back to municipalities will allow for a better ‘reaction time’ to any issues that may arise in a specific community. These municipalities are run by residents who have first-hand knowledge of the problems or safety concerns surrounding their local roadways, and allowing them to determine the speed limits instead of the state will increase responsiveness to residents.”

Niagara County Legislator Tony Nemi, R-Lockport, who has worked to see the speed limit near Starpoint Central School lowered, said he was grateful that the legislation was being filed. “Schoolchildren attending rural schools, in particular, are at risk from fast-moving traffic on nearby highways, and we need to put their safety first,” Nemi said. “Sen. Ortt is taking a decisive step to address that safety challenge with this legislation.

Ortt and Morinello, along with local Assembly Member Ray Walter, have sponsored various pieces of state legislation to lower speed limits within their district, but all expressed frustration with the unnecessary length and difficulty of the current process. The new

legislation would allow county governments to set speed limits within school zones on state roads.

The Starpoint School District, on Mapleton Road, served as a backdrop for the announcement. In May of last year, the road in front of the school was the scene of a severe accident and followed an increase in accidents and close calls along Mapleton Road in recent years. Residents, law enforcement agencies, and local officials have all expressed unease over the current speed limit in relation to road conditions and traffic. Many 55 and 45 miles per hour stretches regularly see fast-moving traffic along with slow-moving agricultural and industrial vehicles.

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 - - In Committee Assembly
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- Signed By Governor

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October 02, 2017

In Senate Committee Transportation

Sponsored by Robert G. Ortt

Do you support this bill?