



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rachel May

## Senator May (SD-53) Held Joint Press Conference on Interstate 81 Decision

RACHEL MAY January 24, 2019

| ISSUE: **INTERSTATE 81, INFRASTRUCTURE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, RACIAL JUSTICE**



**Albany, NY** - Senator Rachel May (SD-53) held a joint press conference in Albany with elected officials and community leaders from Syracuse. They highlighted the need for a robust Draft Environmental Impact Statement and an open dialog with the Central New York region on the various options for the future of I-81 through the Syracuse city center.

Senator May was joined by Assemblyman Al Stirpe; Sharon Owens, Syracuse Deputy Mayor; Joe Driscoll, Syracuse 5th District City Councilor; Twiggy Billue, National Action Network Syracuse Chapter President; Kerin Rigney, Dewitt Town Board Member; Bob Haley, American Institute of Architects; and Lanessa Chaplin Esq., Project Counsel New York Civil Liberties Union.

Each participant spoke for several minutes, covering topics including the need for a robust Draft Environmental Impact Statement from the DOT, the need for large, inclusive, and transparent conversations with the community on each option's viability, the potential for significant growth and leadership for the city of Syracuse, and the ability to redress social and racial injustices perpetrated during the building of the original viaduct.

"We are here to support the community grid option because we believe it is the best option for reviving Syracuse and for bringing back the communities that were initially destroyed in the building of the viaduct in the first place," said **Senator Rachel May**. "The community grid is the opportunity we have been waiting for to transform the scar through the middle of our city into vibrant, productive neighborhoods and to heal the historic wrong that allowed the viaduct to cut through the city in the first place."

"The past decisions regarding the 81 viaduct demolished a community, it dispersed its families," said **Sharon Owens, Deputy Mayor of Syracuse**. "And those families whose legacy still lives on today remember that time in our history and how they were vibrant, how they were a community, and how a highway took precedence over people. That decision destroyed a community. This decision could create a community. We're behind creating a community."

There is no release date yet for the DEIS.

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