



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Todd Kaminsky

Kaminsky Urges Major Safety Study For Eagle Ave Exit On Southern State Parkway

TODD KAMINSKY October 12, 2020

(ROCKVILLE CENTRE, New York) -- On Thursday, October 8th, 2020, Senator Todd Kaminsky, member of the Senate Transportation Committee, wrote to NY State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Commissioner Marie Therese Dominguez urging her to include in her Agency's study of possible improvements to the Southern State Parkway (SSP). With improvements to the SSP an urgent priority for Senator Kaminsky, he requests that solutions to the Eagle Avenue Exit, which is one of the most dangerous spots on the highway, be provided and acted upon.

The letter, sent in response to a request for input from the NYSDOT regarding an assessment of the state of the Parkway, strongly urges that any analysis of safety and infrastructure needs must include the Eagle Avenue area as it represents a real threat to public safety due to steep inclines, poor visibility, and a low clearance overpass. Senator Kaminsky urgently requests that any assessment of the state of the Southern State Parkway include potential solutions to the Eagle Avenue exit for the health of all Long Islanders.

Read Senator Kaminsky's letter to NYSDOT Commissioner Dominguez below:

Dear Commissioner Dominiguez,

I am writing in response to a letter I received from your office soliciting input regarding the ongoing assessment of the Southern State Parkway (“SSP”). I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my long-standing belief that major improvements are needed at, among other places, the stretch of the SSP surrounding exit 18 at Eagle Avenue. This spot has been the site of numerous serious accidents, and represents a real threat to public safety. Any final report on potential enhancements to the SSP should include an analysis of the Eagle Avenue area, along with potential solutions.

Improvements to the SSP must be a top priority. A 2016 study by the New York State Department of Transportation (“DOT”) found that in a five-year span, over 10,500 accidents occurred on the SSP, including 32 fatalities. Reports of major accidents are frequent, with a fatal crash involving a wrong way driver occurring just last month.

The Eagle Avenue Exit is one of the more dangerous spots on the highway; with numerous reported accidents occurring in the vicinity of exit 18 over the last several years. I, along with others, have repeatedly called for the DOT to make improvements. This includes bringing this matter to your personal attention at a budget hearing earlier this year, where I urged you and the DOT to address this location in a future capital plan.

The deadly nature of this area is due in part to its design and layout. Near the exit, eastbound drivers come over a steep incline directly before a bend in the road, making it difficult to see traffic ahead. Drivers unknowingly speed into traffic stopped just on the other side of the hill. Also in this location is an overpass, which further obstructs a driver’s vision. This overpass, known as the Eagle Avenue Bridge, stands at just 7 feet 7 seven inches, making it one of the lowest clearances of any traffic crossing on Long Island. This confluence of factors has unfortunately made Eagle Avenue a traffic nightmare and the site of multiple deadly accidents.

I am glad that the DOT is undertaking this long overdue assessment of the SSP and eagerly await its results. Long Islanders deserve the ability to drive in their communities safely without suffering in clogged traffic. For this reason, improving this portion of the SSP should be a top priority. Thank you for your consideration of this matter, and I look forward to continuing to work with you.

Sincerely,

Todd Kaminsky

Senator, 9th District