



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo, Oberacker urge federal government to prioritize computer chips for snowplows

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO November 15, 2021

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With winter quickly approaching and supply chain issues affecting the nation, New York State Sens. Joseph A. Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, and Peter Oberacker, R-Schenevus, announced today that they have sent a letter to U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg urging the department to prioritize the delivery of computer chips used by snowplows to state and local Departments of Public Works.

In a letter to Secretary Buttigieg, the senators said that it has been brought to their attention that computer chips that state and local DPWS use for their snowplows will be in short supply. This could have a detrimental affect on the departments' ability to clear roads of ice and snow as plows may not be operational, which poses a significant public safety risk.

“We are requesting that your department make it a priority to have the computer chips that state and local DPW’s depend upon for the continued and reliable operation of their snowplows shipped to them before any other entity in the supply chain,” **the senators wrote in their letter to Secretary Buttigieg.** “It is important for the safety of travelers, the continued viability of the economy and to the continued upkeep of our roads and bridges.”

“It is concerning that Departments of Public Works may be handcuffed because of a shortage of important computer chips that they need for their plows and snow removal equipment,” **said Sen. Griffo, ranking member of the state Senate’s Transportation Committee.** “I am hopeful that Secretary Buttigieg will ensure that our DPWs get the technology they need to keep our streets clear of ice and snow. The safety of New Yorkers this winter depends on it.”

“Our local highway departments are vital to our traveling safety – especially when inclement weather strikes,” **Sen. Oberacker said.** “However, if these dedicated men and women are unable to start their vehicles, especially plow trucks, I can accurately forecast a difficult winter. I join Sen. Griffo in calling on Secretary Buttigieg to put our local DPWs first to ensure our highway workers are able to keep our roads safe for all.”

“Winter will be here before we know it and it is imperative that we are able to keep our roads clear of snow, ice and other weather-related hazards and the public safe,” **said Richard Sherman, Town of New Hartford highway superintendent.** “I thank Sen. Griffo and Sen. Oberacker for their advocacy on the behalf of New York’s DPWS and their efforts to ensure

that we have the equipment that we need to do the job.”

“Senator Oberacker and Senator Griffo understand the important role our local highway departments play when it comes to public safety and I appreciate their advocacy,” **said Otsego County Representative Edwin Frazier, Jr., Public Works Committee Chairman.** “It is difficult enough to maintain our equipment and keep our trucks on the road during the harsh winter months without having to worry about part shortages.”

The full text of Sen. Griffo and Sen. Oberacker’s letter is below:

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg

Secretary

U.S. Department of Transportation

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE

Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The supply chain and semiconductor issues which the United States has been contending with for several months now is not limited to consumers. Alarming, it has been brought to our attention that the computer chips that snowplows depend upon to clear roads of snow and ice are similarly in short supply for the many municipalities that depend upon them to perform their duties properly.

This poses a significant risk to the safety and livelihood of the many constituents that we represent in New York State, as well as throughout regions of the country that face sizeable annual snowfall, which should be a prime concern of the United States Department of Transportation as we head into the winter season. New Yorkers rely on local departments of public works and their crews to effectively remove snow and ice from the roads on which they travel to get to work, school and events. While most people in this state are undeterred by significant snowfall, it is imperative that DPW operations be able to continue unimpeded by the supply chain issues that currently exist.

We are requesting that your department make it a priority to have the computer chips that state and local DPW's depend upon for the continued and reliable operation of their snowplows shipped to them before any other entity in the supply chain. It is important for the safety of travelers, the continued viability of the economy and to the continued upkeep of our roads and bridges.

We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Griffo

Senator, 47th District

Peter Oberacker

Senator, 51st District