



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

## Senator Kennedy and GOBike Buffalo Celebrate Signing of Bill to Incentivize Complete Streets Projects Across New York State

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY January 27, 2023

| ISSUE: **COMPLETE STREETS, PEDESTRIAN SAFETY, IMPROVING TRANSPORTATION**



**BUFFALO, N.Y.** – Senator Tim Kennedy (D-**Buffalo**) and City of Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown joined GOBike Buffalo Executive Director Justin Booth Friday to celebrate the signing of [S.3897](#), legislation sponsored by Kennedy that would incentivize municipalities to incorporate Complete Street designs into infrastructure projects by reducing the cost responsibility of cities or towns. Currently, federal complete streets regulations largely exempt most highway projects in New York, because the incorporation of complete streets features are only required for extensive new construction projects. This would empower municipalities to proactively incorporate these features on their own, by cutting a city or town’s responsibility in half, reducing it from 5% to 2.5% of the total project cost.

Complete Streets concepts are designed to create accessibility for all roadway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Designs may include, but are not limited to

bike lanes, sidewalks, specialized bus lanes, frequent crosswalks and pedestrian signals, roundabouts, accessible transit stops, and more. According to the National Complete Streets Coalition, more than 1,600 Complete Streets policies have been passed in the United States, including those adopted by 35 state governments, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

“This is a major step forward in prioritizing community over congestion,” said **Senator Tim Kennedy, Chair of the Senate Transportation Committee**. “By incentivizing municipalities to incorporate these design concepts into infrastructure projects, New York State is once again making strategic investments in the development of safer, inclusive communities. We know Complete Streets not only save lives, but encourage physical activity, spur private investment, and ultimately increase accessibility and transportation equity. I’m proud to deliver this win for our region and state alongside incredible advocates like GObike Buffalo and NYS Safe Streets Coalition.”

“Complete Streets designs protect road users like children, older adults, and the disabled by using paint and concrete to effectively slow car traffic and provide more safe space to those out walking, biking, or rolling”, said **GObike Buffalo Executive Director Justin Booth**. “By protecting our most vulnerable road users, we make streets and roads safer for everyone, including car drivers. Senator Kennedy’s bill that was signed into law last month dramatically lowers the cost municipalities have to shoulder to construct this kind of safe infrastructure. This year, we look forward to working with Senator Kennedy on passing his next bill, which will speed up efforts to proliferate safer streets in our region.”

Earlier this week, Senators Kennedy and GObike Buffalo rallied with members of the NYS Safe Streets Coalition, including members of Families for Safe Streets, Transportation Alternatives, American Heart Association, Tri-State Transportation Campaign, and other members of the NYS Safe Streets Coalition for passage of the [SAFE Streets Act](#) — a lifesaving package of six bills to make streets across the state safe for all who use them.

The bills include measures to:

- **Allow New York City to control its own speed limits** through Sammy’s Law.
- **Create complete streets** by incentivizing safe streets elements in projects receiving state or federal funding and when streets are being resurfaced.
- **Mandate safe vehicles** by requiring intelligent speed assistance and other features in new cars.
- **Support those personally impacted** by guaranteeing basic legal rights to crash victims and their loved ones.
- **Protect vulnerable people on our roads** by requiring drivers to pass bike riders at a safe distance of at least three feet.

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