



April 30, 2010

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**Memorandum in Support;
Enable Safe Access to Public Roads for All Users (S. 5711A)**

Vision Long Island joins with others to promote more livable, economically sustainable, and environmentally responsible growth on Long Island through Smart Growth. Smart Growth focuses on infill, re-development, and open space preservation. It supports mixed-use, mixed-income communities that are convenient, attractive, pedestrian-friendly, and that make affordable housing and public transportation desirable and realistic.

There are currently 95 Smart Growth projects and over 40 local plans throughout Long Island. In addition, Vision has been working for over 12 years to reform the NYS Department of Transportation to include safe streets and traffic calming considerations.

A 2009 National Report titled *Dangerous by Design* by Transportation for America and the Surface Transportation Policy Partnership found some troubling statistics concerning New York pedestrians. The report found that:

- 1 in 5 traffic deaths in New York State are pedestrians;
- New York State had the 3^d highest number in the nation for pedestrian fatalities per 100,000 people aged 65 and older, behind Hawaii and California;
- 22.5% of total traffic deaths in New York State are pedestrians. The national average was 11.8% in 2007-2008; and
- 31% of total traffic deaths in the NYC metropolitan area are pedestrians.

Please support Senate Bill number 5711A, which enables safe access to public roads for all users. The bill, sponsored by Senator Dilan, requires that all transportation improvements improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers regardless of age or ability by using Complete Streets design guidelines. Complete Streets considers all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and passengers, motorists, children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities. The legislation also recognizes that bicycle and pedestrian travel are integral to New York's transportation system.

This legislation would require bicycle and pedestrian accommodations to be included in the planning and development of state, county, and local transportation facilities, plans, and programs. Accommodations would include, but not be limited to, bicycle lanes, lane striping, and paved shoulders suitable for use by bicyclists, share the road signage, crosswalks, pedestrian control signals, curb cuts and ramps.

Several other states have passed Complete Streets bills, including Connecticut, California, and Virginia. Senator Dilan's legislation would bring positive change to make our planners, both at the state and local level, consider all non-auto forms of travel as a routine part of project development as well as the planning for automobiles. This will bring more of a balance to our roads and make them safer for all users. For these reasons, Vision Long Island strongly supports this legislation.