



**New York State Association of
Area Agencies on Aging**

272 Broadway
Albany, NY 12204-2717
Ph. 518-449-7080
Fax 518-449-7055
office@nysaaaa.org
www.nysaaaa.org

May 20, 2011

Memorandum in Support of S. 5411

An Act to amend the highway law, in relation to enabling safe access to public roads for all users by utilizing complete street design principles

The New York State Association of Area Agencies on Aging (NYSAAAA) supports S. 5411, legislation to require the design of more complete streets that would enable safe access for all users: bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and passengers, motorists, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.

As our population ages, the importance of communities that promote independence and mobility becomes even more essential. Over one-fifth of people age 65 and over do not drive. A growing number of New Yorkers are looking for alternatives to the automobile, either because they have stopped driving, want to reduce their driving, or because they want to be more physically active. Walking is an important travel option for older people and all New Yorkers, and under the proper conditions it can provide a safe, healthy transportation alternative for carrying out daily activities. Safe and accessible roadways and sidewalks are a critical link in our transportation system and vitally important to access community services.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2009, 19% of pedestrian fatalities were people ages 65 and older. Complete street design principles include sidewalks, paved shoulders suitable for use by bicyclists, lane stripping, bicycle lanes, share the road signage, crosswalks, pedestrian control signalization, bus pull outs, curb cuts, raised crosswalks, ramps and traffic calming measures designed to allow pedestrian and motor traffic to easily coexist and reduce the number of deaths.

Senator Fuschillo's legislation would bring positive change to make community 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, NYSAAAA supports the bill.

Sincerely,

Laura A. Cameron
Executive Director