ECLEG MAR18'13 PM 4:45

A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED
BY LEGISLATOR McCRACKEN

RE: Urging Greater Investment in the State's CHIPS (Consolidated Highway Improvement) and Marchiselli Programs

WHEREAS, a safe and efficient highway infrastructure is necessary for trade, economic development and revitalization, job creation and retention, schools, agriculture, businesses, health and hospital facilities, emergency responders, as well as the general traveling public; and

WHEREAS, New York State's Consolidated Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) funds are vital to county and local highway departments in order to maintain and upgrade important components of the local transportation system, and to purchase essential highway equipment and materials; and

WHEREAS, the Marchiselli Program is a State component of a successful Federal, State and local partnership, delivering transportation improvements to local highway projects that qualify for federal funding; and

WHEREAS, the State Department of Transportation (DOT) has called for a level for CHIPS investment of $420 million and $56 million for Marchiselli annually to simply maintain the current condition and safety rating of our local transportation system and to prevent further deterioration; and

WHEREAS, for the last five years, appropriations for CHIPS and Marchiselli have been unchanged at $363 million and $39 million respectively, well below the investment recommended to address the needs of the local roads and bridges – resulting in measurable declines in pavement, bridge and culvert conditions; and

WHEREAS, the State DOT has submitted to the New York Works Task Force a proposed 2-year transportation capital plan for the years 2013-14 and 2014-15 that freezes CHIPS and Marchiselli funding for another two years at the Strategic I investment level; and, the 2013-14 Executive budget appropriations for CHIPS and Marchiselli remain unchanged at $363 million and $39 million respectively; and

WHEREAS, the Marchiselli investment is inadequate to meet the documented need statewide, resulting in counties not obtaining state aid for some project phases; and, state reimbursement for advances made by counties for approved work has slowed considerably, creating further financial hardship; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the State DOT "Forward Four" policy (preservation first; system not projects; maximize return on investment; and make it sustainable), additional CHIPS funds are necessary for preventative maintenance type projects – chip seal and other pavement sealing processes – and resurfacing work that is critical to extending the life of the current local highway and bridge infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Budget includes more than $300 million in the New York Works funds to be directed for capital investment in transportation infrastructure, a good portion of which should be used to make up for the losses in federal aid, boost CHIPS and further aid the local transportation system in New York State.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature urge the Governor and State Legislature to recognize the unfunded needs of the local transportation system, and to adopt and fund Strategic II & III investment levels as part of the State Budget; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the aforementioned level of investment is necessary to ensure that local funding programs like CHIPS and Marchiselli are funded at levels that will begin to slow, and hopefully reverse, the deteriorating condition of infrastructure statewide; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be conveyed to the Governor, the Speaker of the Assembly, the Leader of the Republican Conference of the State Senate, the Leader of the Independent Democrat Conference of the State Senate, and all others deemed necessary and proper.

FISCAL IMPACT: None for resolution.