A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY LEGISLATOR DIXON

Re: Supporting the Study of Alternatives to the Skyway

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Skyway was built in 1954 as an overhead roadway above the Buffalo River to permit shipping freight along the Buffalo River while promoting motor traffic to and from the City of Buffalo; and

WHEREAS, at the time of its construction, Buffalo's port received twenty million tons of cargo, necessitating the frequent raising and lowering of drawbridges along the route; and

WHEREAS, currently, the port receives less than two million tons of cargo annually; and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Skyway has been found to be "functionally obsolete" under federal highway standards, due to it lacking shoulders, a feature which causes it to be shut down completely for some accidents; and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Skyway is in need of significant repair; and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Skyway has been listed by the United States Department of Transportation as "fracture critical," which means that failure of certain structural elements could lead to catastrophic failure; and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Skyway will cost over $100 million over the next twenty years to maintain; and

WHEREAS, the Buffalo Skyway is still a major connector of Buffalo and the southern half of Erie County, with an estimated 43,000 vehicles using the route daily; and

WHEREAS, there may be more cost effective ways to accommodate commuters who use the Buffalo Skyway; and

WHEREAS, New York State Department of Transportation Commissioner Joan McDonald has directed her staff to conduct a plausibility review to identify critical issues facing the Buffalo Skyway.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature goes on record supporting the New York State Department of Transportation's study of alternatives to the Buffalo Skyway; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be forwarded to New York State Department of Transportation Commissioner Joan McDonald, Governor Andrew Cuomo and Congressman Brian Higgins.

Fiscal Impact: None.