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Date: February 23, 2009

To: Senator DeFronzo
Representative Guererra
Senator Boucher
Representative Scribner
Members of the Transportation Committee

From: Senator L. Scott Frantz

Re: *SB 426 An Act Concerning Traffic Congestion Mitigation*

I am writing in support of SB 426 which is designed to encourage the Department of Transportation to work collaboratively with local traffic officials to come up with common sense ideas to mitigate traffic congestion around the State.

We all know that we are facing very difficult budget restrictions this year. That is what makes this proposal more timely and important than ever. While the Governor and Legislature have committed hundreds of millions of dollars to improving transit and highways, there are still some traffic mitigation ideas that can be done with minimal cost to the State or municipalities.

This bill requires no additional staffing or funding to implement. My proposal simply requires the DOT to assign already existing employees as liaisons to meet with local traffic officials in each town with a highway entrance and exit ramp. Having these liaisons available to meet the local traffic officials will allow them to work together to come up with creative solutions to solve local traffic problems.

Local officials have the day-to-day understanding of how their road networks are working, or not working. Local traffic officials may often have intimate knowledge of traffic flow and the reasons their roads experience bottlenecks. Working as a team local officials and the DOT can determine whether proposals such as opening or closing entrance and exit ramps during peak traffic times, or allowing one lane of a multilane road to alternate directions during rush hours, would mitigate traffic.

Often, the Department of Transportation works in a vacuum when planning and executing projects. While drafted plans and blueprints may seem logical on paper, often there are common sense issues which are not recognized that cause congestion and other traffic issues. Getting DOT employees on the ground in each municipality on an annual basis will ensure that they understand the ever-changing congestion issues on our highways and local roads. And by working collaboratively with our local traffic officials we will be able to come up with some common sense ideas that will lessen the impact of traffic congestion and help improve the roads for all users.

Thank you for your time and consideration.