



TOWN OF MORNINGSIDE

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March 3, 2020

Chairman Guy Guzzone
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Chairman Kumar Barve
House Environmental and Transportation Committee

Subject: HB 1394/SB 982 – Highway User Revenues – Revenue and Distribution

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are writing in support of HB 1394/SB 982, which would:

- Remove the funding sunset currently set to go into effect after FY 2024 when municipal highway user revenues (HURs) would drop back to recession level lows;
- Increase municipal funding starting in FY 2025 to the approximate levels that existed prior to the state diversion in FY 2010;
- Apply the same lock box protections afforded to the rest of the transportation trust fund to the HUR account; and
- Tie HUR to the consumer price index so that HURs rise with inflation.

An important aspect of this bill is that it allows over four years before any funding increase occurs, providing the State time to adjust its project funding allocations. However, two items that can be addressed immediately are removing the sunset and lock boxing the HUR account; these provisions of the bill would provide critical certainty to municipal governments that the funding is long term and protected.

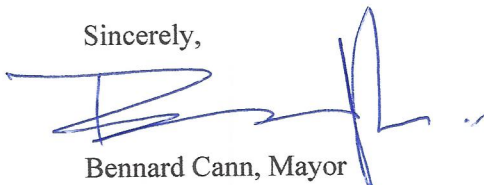
The legislation passed by the General Assembly in 2018 provided for the current funding level for municipal HUR, which is the highest it has been in over a decade, for a duration of five fiscal years which has been greatly helpful in maintaining local infrastructure; however with the sunset looming after FY 2024 it is difficult to engage in any long term transportation project plans.

In recent years we have been able to better take care of our streets & sidewalks that were in disrepair due to not having the funding to do the things to keep our residents safe. With the increased funding, we also have been able to purchase equipment that will make it easier for us to do the upkeep needed to remain ahead of any issues that may come up, while allowing our staff to work smarter, not harder. We still have a few issues that need to be dealt with, and having this funding will allow us to continue to face them in a timely fashion.

We sincerely hope that HB 1394/SB 982 receives a favorable report. 2020 is the year to reengage the discussion of fully and permanently restoring highway user revenues to local governments.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bennard Cann, Mayor