



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Executive Council

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Executive Councilor Janet Stevens Announces Safety Improvements Route 125

Concord, New Hampshire -The recent announcement by Executive Councilor Janet Stevens regarding the increase in motor vehicle accidents on Route 125 is a cause for concern. The 51-mile corridor has witnessed a surge in crashes, including a recent fatal motorcycle accident. The three-year period from 2017 to 2019 saw a staggering 1,600 crashes on this road highlighting the urgent need for action to ensure the safety of drivers and pedestrians.

On March 23, 2023, a Community Forum was held in Brentwood, chaired by Executive Councilor Stevens, who is a member of the Governor's Commission on Intermodal Transportation, to address the pressing issue of improving and expanding motor vehicle safety on Route 125. The highway, ranked as the 4th most dangerous roadway in New Hampshire for motor vehicle crashes, has been the site of numerous accidents in recent years, leading to injuries and fatalities.

During the Community Forum held in Brentwood on March 23, 2023, Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners from the Departments of Public Safety and Transportation (DOT), along with representatives from the New Hampshire Office of Highway Safety, State Police, and local law enforcement officials, were in attendance. State officials heard the testimony of concerned residents and their requests for enhanced safety measures, especially at the intersection of Route 125 and South Road.

In response to the concerns raised at the Community Forum, the Department of Public Safety's Office of Highway Safety Bureau swiftly acted. A collaboration with state police, county sheriffs, and local law enforcement jurisdictions along Route 125 to improve safety and expand enforcement along one of the state's busiest and most dangerous traffic corridors was launched within days. As part of this effort, eight New Hampshire State Troopers and several local law enforcement personnel were deployed during the week of March 26, 2023, to increase police presence and enforce traffic laws along the corridor.

"The voices of concerned constituents at the Route 125 Community Forum were heard and acted upon swiftly. I am grateful for the immediate increase in safety patrols by State Police and local law enforcement, which was implemented within 96 hours of the forum. Additionally, State Police, NH Highway Safety, and police chiefs from several towns, including Plaistow, Kingston, Brentwood, Epping, Lee, Barrington, and Rochester, met within a week of the Brentwood forum to formalize enforcement strategies.

Safety strategies include the use of variable messaging signs, portable speed radars and other measures aimed at improving safety along Route 125. This rapid response and collaboration among public safety and law enforcements leaders is unprecedented and greatly appreciated", said Executive Councilor Stevens

Despite recent roadway safety improvements and corridor studies along portions of Route 125, Plaistow to Kingston and Epping to Rochester, which resulted in intersection upgrades at Middle Road and North Road in Brentwood, a short section has been overlooked – the unsignalized intersection at South Road. Following a site walk with the NH DOT, Rockingham County Planning Commission staff, local law enforcement, Executive Councilor Stevens called for immediate upgrades at the intersection.

"A Road Safety Audit, an initial requirement for Highway Safety Improvement Programs (HSIP), will be conducted at the Intersection of Route 125 and South Road this Summer. This is a critical first step to identify and provide critical mitigation measures which could include a traffic signal or roundabout. This is my top transportation infrastructure project in my district. Average daily traffic on Route 125 increased by 9% in 2022, along with a statewide increase in distracted and impaired driving, which has resulted in increased fatalities in New Hampshire," according to Stevens.

The 2022 data for New Hampshire Highway fatalities is alarming: 147 highway fatalities in 2022 which is a 20% increase from 2021; and 32 motorcycle fatalities for the year which is the highest amount since official tracking began in 2012.

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Executive Councilor Janet Stevens of Rye represents the 266,000 residents living in District Three, which encompasses the cities and towns of - Atkinson, Brentwood, Chester, Danville, Derry, E. Kingston, Epping, Exeter, Fremont, Greenland, Hampstead, Hampton, Hampton Falls, Kensington, Kingston, New Castle, Newfields, Newington, Newmarket, Newton, No. Hampton, Pelham, Plaistow, Raymond, Rye, Salem, Sandown, Seabrook, So Hampton, Stratham, Windham and the City of Portsmouth.