

STATE OF NEW YORK

S. 3225--A

A. 2671--A

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

SENATE - ASSEMBLY

January 20, 2017

IN SENATE -- Introduced by Sen. LAVALLE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Local Government -- recommitted to the Committee on Local Government in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

IN ASSEMBLY -- Introduced by M. of A. THIELE, PALUMBO -- read once and referred to the Committee on Local Governments -- recommitted to the Committee on Transportation in accordance with Assembly Rule 3, sec. 2 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the general municipal law, in relation to creating the Peconic Bay regional transportation council; and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Legislative findings. The legislature hereby finds that
2 over the past thirty years, rapid growth and development in the Peconic
3 Bay region of Long Island, while providing for a successful economy, has
4 also resulted in some unavoidable, adverse impacts that threaten the
5 region's future quality of life and future economic prosperity. Traffic
6 congestion has been one of the primary adverse impacts from such rapid
7 development.
8 Expanding traffic congestion has resulted in deteriorating traffic
9 safety with increased traffic accidents and fatalities. In addition,
10 traffic congestion has resulted in increased trip delays, declining air
11 quality, adverse impacts to historic and rural resources in the region's
12 villages and hamlets, parking problems, adverse impacts to residential
13 communities and neighborhoods resulting from the diversion of traffic
14 from major highways and arteries to rural residential streets and roads.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 The region's tourist and second home industries, the cornerstone of
2 its prosperity, are threatened if the adverse consequences of traffic
3 congestion are not promptly and adequately addressed. Further, projec-
4 tions from the state department of transportation and local governments
5 indicate that there will be a continued growth in year-round population,
6 seasonal residents, and traffic into the foreseeable future, exacerbat-
7 ing an already major problem.

8 The legislature finds that the unique geography of the Peconic Bay
9 region limits the ability to expand highway capacity for motor vehicles.
10 The narrow forks limit the augmentation of future highway capacity in an
11 east-west direction. The construction of new highways is not a feasible
12 alternative, and the option of improving capacity on existing highways
13 is limited. In addition to unique geography, impacts to the region's
14 natural and historic resources, such as open space, farmland, watershed
15 areas, wetlands, and historic sites and landmarks also limit increasing
16 highway capacity.

17 While the region's highway infrastructure is severely overburdened,
18 its public transit capabilities are underdeveloped. The region possesses
19 underutilized rail capacity with minimal service from the Long Island
20 Rail Road to the region.

21 The legislature finds that the development of new public transit
22 opportunities for the Peconic Bay region represents the best alternative
23 to address growing traffic congestion and other transportation problems.
24 The region possesses an existing rail infrastructure. Existing service
25 to the region is minimal. Further, there is no coordination between rail
26 service and existing bus service. The opportunity to improve service is
27 clearly available.

28 The region's local governments have recognized the adverse impacts
29 resulting from growing traffic congestion and the need to explore other
30 transportation options such as public transit. Independently, the
31 comprehensive plans of the region's towns and villages have cited traf-
32 fic congestion as a critical problem and have identified improved public
33 transit as a future goal. Towns have created task forces and commissions
34 to address the transportation issue.

35 Further, collectively, as a region, the local governments have joined
36 together to explore public transit options to mitigate traffic
37 congestion. As early as 1994, the East End Economic and Environmental
38 Institute, under the auspices of the East End Mayors and Supervisors
39 Association issued a report entitled Blue Print for Our Future which
40 called for improved and coordinated bus and rail service in the Peconic
41 Bay region.

42 In 2005, after a four-year public outreach process, the local govern-
43 ments of the region issued the result of its SEEDS (Sustainable East End
44 Development) project. This initiative also recognized the need to create
45 improved transportation opportunities, including selected road improve-
46 ments and increased and coordinated public transit.

47 The private sector has also recognized the need for improved regional
48 transportation opportunities. The Institute for Sustainable Development,
49 Southampton College of Long Island University, held a conference and
50 issued a report calling for improved transportation opportunities in the
51 region. Five Town Rural Transit, Inc., a private, not-for-profit corpo-
52 ration has also recognized the need for public transit improvements. In
53 2005, they unveiled a conceptual plan for an East End Shuttle providing
54 coordinated bus and rail service, and issued a development proposal to
55 further that goal.

1 In 2007, the state of New York provided a \$300,000 grant under its
2 Shared Municipal Services Initiative (SMSI) program to study the feasi-
3 bility of the East End Shuttle concept. In addition, the Long Island
4 Rail Road, in conjunction with the towns of Southampton and East Hampton
5 initiated a pilot program in 2007-2008 to provide a rail shuttle and
6 connecting bus service during the reconstruction of County Road 39. This
7 pilot program demonstrated that the rail/bus shuttle concept could be
8 successful. In 2009, the "East End Transportation Study Report", funded
9 by the SMSI program, was completed by the Volpe National Transportation
10 Systems Center, U.S. Department of Transportation. The study concluded
11 that the East End Shuttle concept was both viable and desirable.

12 In summary, the problem of traffic congestion with its adverse impacts
13 on the local environment, economy, and quality of life has long been
14 recognized. Further, a multitude of local governments, regional cooper-
15 ative initiatives, and private initiatives have all identified improved
16 public transit with increased and coordinated rail and bus service as
17 the cornerstone for solving the problem. The concept has been at the
18 center of public policy discussions for more than a decade.

19 The next step is the full development of the East End Shuttle concept
20 in order to implement new transit opportunities in a timely fashion.

21 Currently, no governmental entity exists which can coordinate the
22 multitude of local governments, state government, federal government,
23 and other stakeholders that must participate to implement a successful
24 public transit initiative for the Peconic Bay region.

25 It is the intent of the legislature with this act to provide the
26 necessary governmental framework and resources that will foster the
27 cooperation necessary to implement a public transit proposal for the
28 Peconic Bay region. This legislation will give the local governments the
29 regional framework to develop and implement this initiative, and will
30 mandate the cooperation of state and federal agencies. Further, it will
31 provide for the involvement of all stakeholders and community members in
32 the development process to insure an open and comprehensive decision
33 making process.

34 § 2. The general municipal law is amended by adding a new article 5-M
35 to read as follows:

36 ARTICLE 5-M

37 PECONIC BAY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

38 Section 119-aaa. Definitions.

39 119-bbb. Peconic Bay regional transportation council.

40 119-ccc. Powers and duties of the council.

41 119-ddd. Agency cooperation.

42 119-eee. Implementation report for the transportation plan.

43 119-fff. Submission to the legislature.

44 § 119-aaa. Definitions. As used in this article the following terms
45 shall have the following meanings:

46 1. "Peconic Bay region" means the towns of East Hampton, Riverhead,
47 Shelter Island, Southampton, and Southold in the county of Suffolk.

48 2. "County" means the county of Suffolk.

49 3. "Municipal corporation" means a town or village in the Peconic Bay
50 region.

51 4. "State" means the state of New York.

52 5. "State agency" means any office, department, board, commission,
53 bureau, division, authority, public benefit corporation, agency or
54 instrumentality of the state.

55 6. "Transportation plan" means the plan of public transportation
56 projects for the Peconic Bay region provided for in the east end trans-

1 portation study, prepared by the Volpe National Transportation Systems
2 Center, dated November, two thousand nine.

3 7. "Public transportation project" means any rapid transit, railroad,
4 omnibus, marine transportation, or other public transportation project.

5 8. "Council" means the council created pursuant to section one hundred
6 nineteen-bbb of this article.

7 9. "Governor" means the governor of the state of New York.

8 § 119-bbb. Peconic Bay regional transportation council. 1. There is
9 hereby created the Peconic Bay regional transportation council. Such
10 council shall consist of twenty voting members: one member to be
11 appointed by the governor who will serve at the pleasure of the gover-
12 nor, and fourteen ex officio members who are the county executive of the
13 county of Suffolk, the five town supervisors from the Peconic Bay
14 region, two village mayors to be appointed by the East End Village Offi-
15 cial's Association, the United States congressman representing the Pecon-
16 ic Bay region, the state senator representing the Peconic Bay region,
17 the two state assembly members representing the Peconic Bay region, and
18 the two county legislators representing the Peconic Bay region, and five
19 citizen members with an interest in transportation and public transit to
20 be appointed by the town board of each town in the Peconic Bay region.
21 Each town shall have one appointment. Each ex officio member may
22 appoint a designated representative, by official authority filed with
23 the council, to exercise his or her powers and perform his or her
24 duties, including the right to vote on matters before the council.

25 2. The council shall elect one of its members as chairperson. Twelve
26 members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business or
27 the exercise of any power or function of the council. An affirmative
28 vote of eleven or more members shall be required to pass a resolution or
29 otherwise exercise any functions or powers of the council.

30 § 119-ccc. Powers and duties of the council. The council shall have
31 the following powers:

32 1. to make by-laws for the regulation and management of its affairs;

33 2. to establish a citizen advisory committee to assist it with its
34 duties and responsibilities;

35 3. to establish a technical advisory committee to assist it with its
36 duties and responsibilities;

37 4. to develop an implementation report for the transportation plan,
38 with the advice of the advisory committees;

39 5. to utilize to the extent practicable, the state and facilities of
40 existing state and local agencies;

41 6. to make and execute contracts and all other instruments necessary
42 or convenient for the exercise of its powers and duties under this arti-
43 cle;

44 7. to sue and be sued;

45 8. to appoint an executive officer, officers, agents, employees, and
46 prescribe their duties and qualifications;

47 9. to hold hearings in the exercise of its powers, functions, and
48 duties as provided for by this article;

49 10. to contract for professional and technical assistance and advice;

50 11. to contract for and accept any assistance, including but not
51 limited to gifts, grants, or loans of funds, or of property from the
52 federal government or any agency or instrumentality thereof, or any
53 state agency, or from any other public or private source and to comply,
54 subject to the provisions of this article, with the terms and conditions
55 thereof.

1 § 119-ddd. Agency cooperation. 1. Every state agency shall offer full
2 cooperation to the council in carrying out the provisions of this arti-
3 cle.

4 2. Every agency of the county and the municipal corporations shall
5 offer full cooperation to the council in carrying out the provisions of
6 this article.

7 § 119-eee. Implementation report for the transportation plan. 1. The
8 council is hereby directed to prepare an implementation report for the
9 transportation plan for the Peconic Bay region which shall include:

10 (a) establishment of shuttle trains utilizing the existing right of
11 way of the Long Island Rail Road;

12 (b) establishment and coordination of bus transportation to complement
13 shuttle trains;

14 (c) a regional governance structure to operate the transportation
15 plan;

16 (d) establishment of park and rail facilities; and

17 (e) additional non-stop trains from New York city to the Peconic Bay
18 region.

19 2. The implementation report shall be prepared in sufficient detail
20 and specificity to permit the relevant governmental authorities to
21 proceed directly to the implementation of the transportation plan. The
22 implementation report shall establish a timetable for recommended public
23 transportation projects. The implementation report shall include a capi-
24 tal plan and budget for its implementation. The implementation report
25 shall include the assessment of environmental impacts, preliminary engi-
26 neering, and final design.

27 3. At least five public hearings, one in each town in the Peconic Bay
28 region shall be held on the final implementation plan.

29 4. A proposition to approve the implementation plan shall be submitted
30 to the voters as a referendum in each of the towns in the Peconic Bay
31 region at the general election to be held at least ninety days after the
32 completion of the public hearings provided for in subdivision three of
33 this section. Such referendum shall be deemed approved if it is approved
34 by a majority of the voters voting on such referendum in each town in
35 the Peconic Bay region.

36 § 119-fff. Submission to the legislature. Upon approval of the plan
37 by referendum, such approved implementation report shall be submitted to
38 the legislature by the council no later than thirty days after such
39 approval.

40 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall remain in full
41 force and effect until December 31, 2028 when upon such date the
42 provisions of this act shall expire and be deemed repealed.