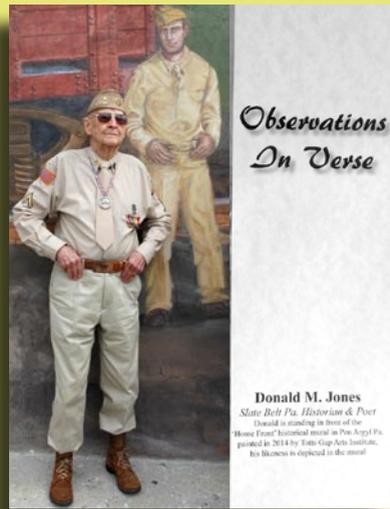


Slate Belt History From The Archives of Donald Jones

Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times



Here's a bit of information most people haven't heard of. During world war two this house of Mr. Milton Flory and the Bangor High School building were listed as potential air raid shelters and were posted.

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I-80 ROCKFALL MITIGATION PROJECT



Update – I-80 Rockfall Mitigation Project

By Senator Scavello

PEN ARGYL - Last week the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) held a Bi-State Leadership Summit on the I-80 Rockfall Mitigation Project. A video of the presentation made at the meeting can be viewed here. The project website is found here. Following the meeting, I continue to have major concerns about this project with many unanswered questions and a continued frustration over the lack of public participation/input in the project.

Numerous constituent and governmental concerns have been expressed to me – which I share – regarding the I-80 Rockfall Mitigation project in Knowlton and Hardwick Townships, NJ.

As we are all aware, any highway project of this magnitude has ripple effects with the potential to impact the adjacent region well beyond the location of the project site. With the I-80 Rockfall Mitigation project in particular, the public has been given wildly varying information in terms of the project scope, economic impact, immense project cost, and potential for gridlock on detour routes previously outlined by NJDOT.

As public officials, we are tasked with upholding the public trust, a principle that relies on credible, accessible and updated information whenever major decisions are made by a governing body or state agency. As State Senator for the 40th Senatorial District of Pennsylvania, I represent communities, most notably Upper and Lower Mount Bethel Townships and Portland and Delaware Water Gap Boroughs, that stand to bear significant impacts from any rockfall mitigation on the New Jersey stretch of Interstate 80. The entire original detour route presented by NJDOT goes through municipalities in my district and bears significant economic and cost.

The additional cost to our communities includes the significant environmental impact that will be felt as a result of detoured commuter and truck traffic flooding onto secondary and tertiary roadways. Air quality will be impacted significantly with increased traffic volumes and inevitable idling traffic as roads which are not designed to handle the significant traffic volumes, are used by motorists using real-time GPS to avoid detour backups.

When my municipalities express concerns about a project with an unknown cost, unknown final design, unknown justification, and unknown economic impact absent any formal studies, I certainly understand the severe angst caused when NJDOT's response is "we are confident" the project will not impede traffic or the local economy. Without real data or updated impact studies, "confidence" is an impossibility.

The 40th Senatorial District, is home to thousands of New Jersey-bound commuters and one of Pennsylvania's largest tourism hubs largely due to the aesthetic beauty of the region. The beauty that anchors our tourism industry will be sullied by ugly metal fencing through one of this nation's most scenic landmarks. I continue to request that NJDOT strongly consider fixing the real problem of the "s-curves" with a modern design that includes additional travel lanes as Pennsylvania is preparing to do on the other side of the Delaware River along Interstate 80. Rather than creating a bottleneck where 3 lanes on the PA side meets 2 lanes on the NJ side, NJDOT should work with FHWA to address this concern.

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