



NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

March 2, 2020

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Executive Chamber
State Capitol, Second Floor
Albany, NY 12224

Hon. Marie Therese Dominguez, Commissioner
NYS Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins
Temporary President and Majority Leader
Room 907 LOB
Albany, NY 12247

Hon. Carl E. Heastie
Speaker of the Assembly
Room 932 LOB
Albany, NY 12248

Hon. John J. Flanagan
Senate Minority Conference Leader
Room 315 Capitol
Albany, NY 12247

Hon. William A. Barclay
Assembly Minority Conference Leader
Room 933 LOB
Albany, NY 12248

Hon. Timothy M. Kennedy
Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
Room 708 LOB
Albany, NY 12247

Hon. William B. Magnarelli
Chair, Assembly Transportation Committee
Room 830 LOB
Albany, NY 12248

Dear Governor Cuomo and Legislative Leaders:

For the eighth consecutive session, on behalf of local transportation leaders, municipalities and taxpayers from throughout our respective legislative districts and across New York State, we welcome this opportunity to address the urgent need for greater state investment in local roads, bridges and culverts.

The approaching fiscal year presents a pivotal benchmark for the future of transportation infrastructure in New York State. Indeed, the Governor has highlighted that “the nation’s most aggressive \$275 billion infrastructure program,” including \$175 Billion in newly proposed funding, is underway. In putting forth a “record level of investment,” the 2020-2021 Executive budget proposal notes, “New York’s economy relies on a resilient and efficient transportation infrastructure network of roads and bridges to continue attracting investment and creating jobs. The renewal and modernization of transportation infrastructure is fundamental to rejuvenating and enhancing the economic competitiveness of the State’s communities.”

We agree. In particular, however, we believe that New York State’s **investment in local transportation infrastructure** must be a foundation of the nation’s most aggressive infrastructure program in order for this program to achieve its envisioned goals.

It's important to be clear at the outset that equitability, fairness and parity remain essential when funding our state's infrastructure. We support and recognize the importance of funding for the five-year MTA Capital Plan as a critical infrastructure investment that is necessary to meet the transportation needs of residents, commuters and visitors for our downstate region. We believe just as strongly, however, that funding for a five-year DOT Capital Plan is an equally necessary and critical investment for the residents, motorists and taxpayers of the State of New York, particularly Upstate. We are one state, with challenging infrastructure needs statewide, and therefore we believe it is critically important that the capital plans for the MTA and the DOT should always reflect true parity. While the 2020-21 Executive Budget proposes \$51 billion for a five-year MTA Capital Plan, a 70% increase over the previous five-year plan, it proposes an \$11.9-billion, two-year DOT Capital Plan, a 33% increase. At the very least, we strongly believe that the guiding principles of parity demand that the percentage increases in the proposed Capital Plans be comparable.

We once again stress that New York State's direct investment in local roads and bridges through the Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS) remains fundamental to the mission highlighted above. It deserves priority consideration in the final allocation of the record level of state investment the Executive proposes for the 2020-21 fiscal year.

CHIPS is the key difference for local communities, economies, governments, motorists and taxpayers throughout the Empire State, including New York City and surrounding metro areas, and we should no longer ignore this fact.

This session, perhaps more than ever before, we believe the opportunity exists to strengthen past successes and, most importantly, revitalize our investment to address the tremendous, still unmet needs and challenges facing the effective maintenance and improvement of local roads, bridges and culverts in every region of New York State.

It is attainable, especially in the context of the Executive's call for a new \$175-billion infrastructure plan, including an \$87-billion investment in transportation. Even if we do not achieve parity with the MTA proposal, minimally, the DOT Capital Plan should utilize a portion of its proposed funding increase to boost funding for our local roads, bridges and culverts since none of the proposed additional funding was earmarked to increase funding for the critically important CHIPS program.

It is warranted. Local governments, for the foreseeable future, will continue to struggle to address budgetary demands in the face of the state-imposed property tax cap, rising pension and health care costs, and additional unfunded state mandates, among other burdens – including, as noted below, that the CHIPS base level has remained stagnant since 2013.

Therefore, we once again join our local leaders to issue this call for:

- Achieving the past practice of mutual five-year Capital Plans between the MTA and DOT with parity as a priority that benefits both upstate and downstate;
- Parity in the percentage funding increases proposed for the five-year MTA Capital Plan and the two-year DOT Capital Plan;
- increasing the CHIPS base funding level by \$150 million to a total of \$588 million annually. The CHIPS base level has remain unchanged at \$438 million for the past seven years. The last base aid increase was achieved in 2013 with the enactment of a \$75-million increase. **The time has come to strengthen the state's annual baseline investment and the opportunity clearly exists within the framework of the Executive's proposed two-year DOT Capital Plan.** We simply must take this step in order to move this entire state forward in economic growth, job creation and property tax relief;

- restoring the \$65-million “Extreme Winter Recovery” allocation slated for elimination in the 2020-21 Executive Budget. This allocation has become essential to the ability of our municipalities to address local needs and, particularly within the context of another extreme winter season, fundamental to our state-level commitment;
- doubling PAVE-NY local funding from \$100 million to \$200 million annually; and
- doubling BRIDGE-NY local funding from \$100 million to \$200 million annually, with additional funding for culverts.

The case is compelling for New York State to take these proposed steps to address undeniable local transportation infrastructure shortcomings, and we believe it is simply the right thing to do. A stronger state-local partnership is the only solution to meeting the critical investment level needed to maintain and improve local roads, bridges and culverts. Keep in mind that:

- Local governments are responsible for maintaining nearly 87 percent of the roads in New York State and one-half of the state’s 18,000 bridges;
- Drivers on local roads contribute nearly half of the gas taxes collected in New York State;
- Forty-eight percent of the vehicle miles traveled in New York are on local roads, yet less than 12 percent of the taxes and fees paid to the state by these drivers go back to maintaining local roads;
- Estimates by the State Comptroller, state Department of Transportation (DOT), and other independent studies have shown a large number of local road mileage deteriorating and many local bridges rated structurally deficient or functionally obsolete;
- Thirty-six percent of bridges are deficient and 38 percent of road pavements are rated fair or poor, and getting worse;
- According to TRIP, a national transportation advocacy group, roads and bridges that are deficient, congested, or lack desirable safety features, cost New York motorists an additional \$24.9 billion annually — nearly \$2,300 per driver in some areas — due to higher vehicle operating costs, traffic accidents and congestion-related delays;
- If the overriding goal is this state’s economic competitiveness, it cannot be overlooked that businesses locate in towns, villages and cities and, therefore, it is imperative to ensure that local roads and bridges are maintained to spur economic development and job creation, while helping to control property taxes for individuals and businesses;
- Every \$1 invested in CHIPS is \$1 less the local property taxpayer has to pay. Additionally, every \$1 invested in the CHIPS program can save from \$6-\$14 in long-term rehabilitation costs. This state assistance benefits the middle class struggling with high local property taxes;
- The State Comptroller has estimated there will be \$89 billion in unmet local infrastructure needs over the next two decades. In an October 2017 report, the comptroller estimated that bridges owned by local governments alone require an estimated \$27.4 billion in repairs; and
- According to an analysis by the New York State Association of Town Superintendents of Highways, the local highway system faces an annual funding gap of \$1.3 billion.

A long-overdue increase in the CHIPS base level, restoration of “Extreme Winter Recovery” assistance, and enhanced BRIDGE-NY and PAVE-NY allocations will significantly strengthen the foundation we

have built over the last several state budgets and further solidify our fundamental belief that "Local Roads Matter!"

Through the renewed, vigorous, long-term state investment we have outlined, we will finally move toward the safe and reliable local infrastructure we envision, an infrastructure that will serve as the catalyst for future community and economic development, job creation, and overall public and motorist safety.

Once again, thank you for your leadership and thoughtful consideration. We look forward to working with you to achieve these critical goals and make the 2020-21 New York State budget truly transformative for our local roads, bridges and culverts.

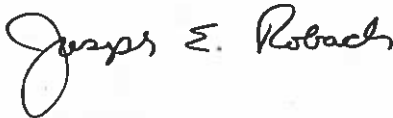
Sincerely,



Thomas F. O'Mara
Senate District 58



Philip A. Palmesano
Assembly District 132



Joseph E. Robach
Senate District 56



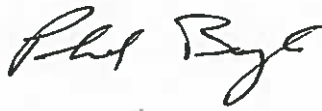
Fred Akshar
Senate District 52



George A. Amedore, Jr.
Senate District 46



George M. Borrello
Senate District 57



Phil Boyle
Senate District 4



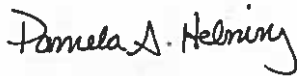
Rich Funke
Senate District 55



Patrick M. Gallivan
Senate District 59



Joseph A. Griffo
Senate District 47



Pamela Helming
Senate District 54



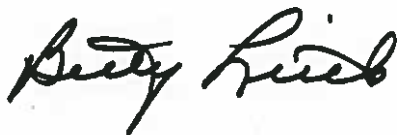
Chris Jacobs
Senate District 60



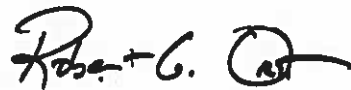
Daphne V. Jordan
Senate District 43



Kenneth P. LaValle
Senate District 1



Betty Little
Senate District 45



Robert G. Ortt
Senate District 62



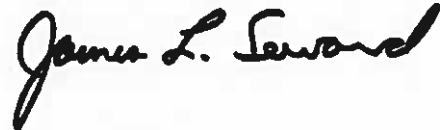
Michael H. Ranzenhofer
Senate District 61



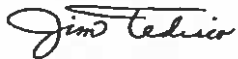
Patty Ritchie
Senate District 48



Sue Serino
Senate District 41



James L. Seward
Senate District 51



James Tedisco
Senate District 49



Andrew J. Lanza
Senate District 24

CHIPS/BRIDGE FUNDING LETTER



Daniel G. Stec, 114th A.D.



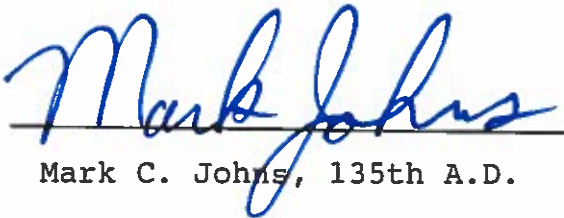
Kenneth D. Blankenbush, 117th A.D.



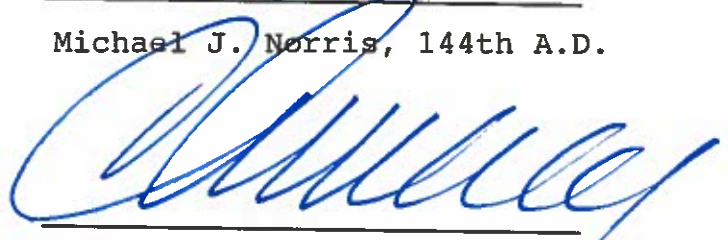
Clifford W. Crouch, 122nd A.D.



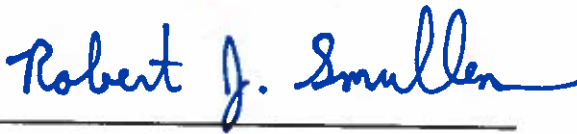
Michael J. Norris, 144th A.D.



Mark C. Johns, 135th A.D.



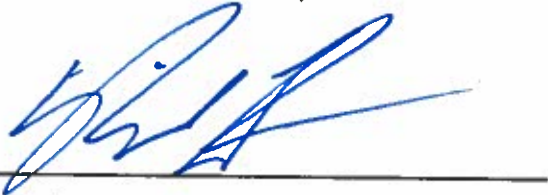
Christopher Tague, 102nd A.D.



Robert Smullen, 118th A.D.



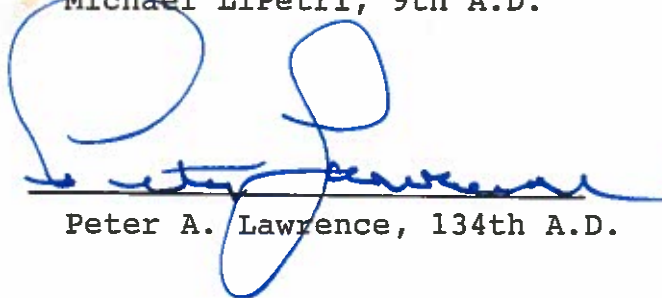
David G. McDonough, 14th A.D.



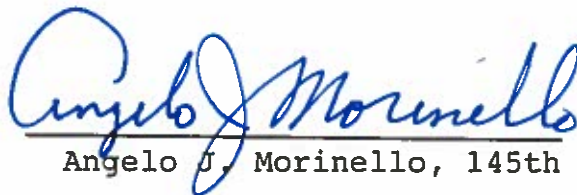
Michael LiPetri, 9th A.D.



Colin J. Schmitt, 99th A.D.

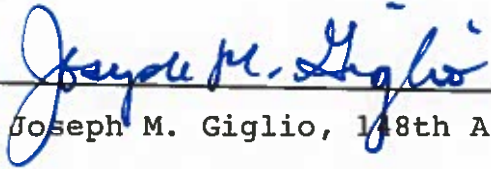


Peter A. Lawrence, 134th A.D.

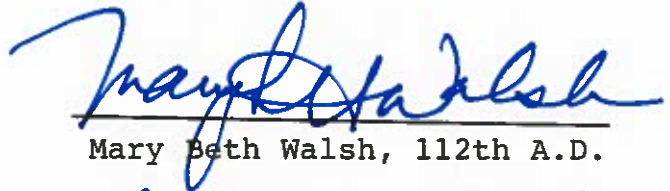


Angelo J. Morinello, 145th A.D.

CHIPS/BRIDGE FUNDING LETTER



Joseph M. Giglio, 148th A.D.



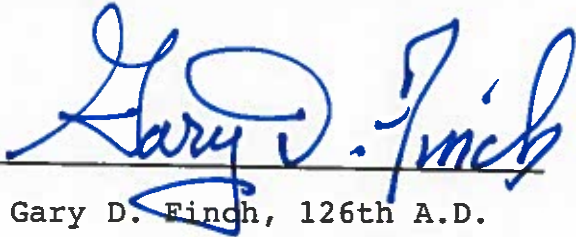
Mary Beth Walsh, 112th A.D.



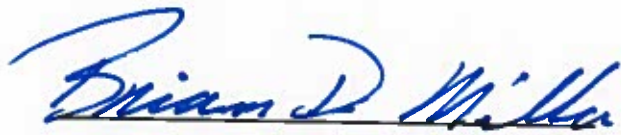
Andrew Goodell, 150th A.D.



Michael J. Fitzpatrick, 8th A.D.



Gary D. Finch, 126th A.D.



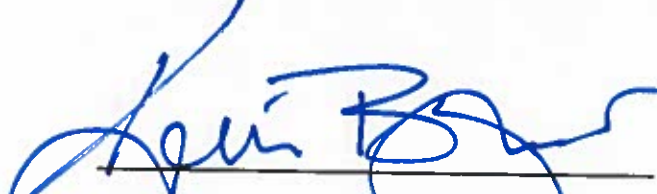
Brian D. Miller, 101st A.D.



Brian D. Manktelow, 130th A.D.



Karl Brabanec, 98th A.D.



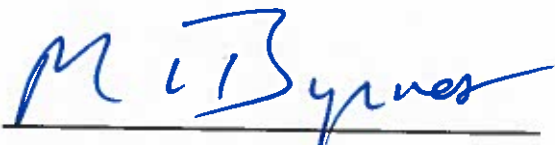
Kevin M. Byrne, 94th A.D.



John K. Mikulin, 17th A.D.



Joseph DeStefano, 3rd A.D.



Marjorie L. Byrnes, 133rd A.D.

CHIPS/BRIDGE FUNDING LETTER



Brian M. Kolb, 131st A.D.



Anthony H. Palumbo, 2nd A.D.



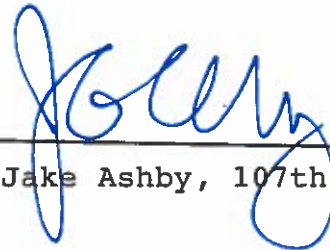
Mark C. Walczyk, 116th A.D.



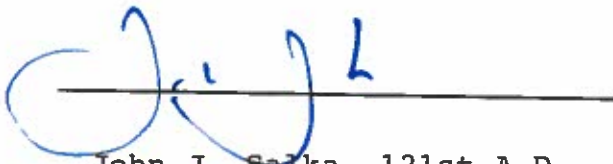
Douglas Smith, 5th A.D.



Christopher S. Friend, 124th A.D.



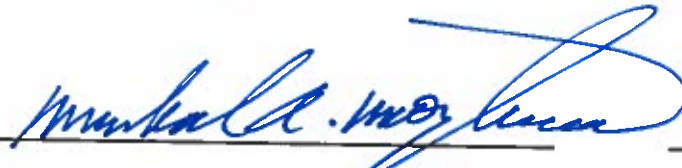
Jake Ashby, 107th A.D.



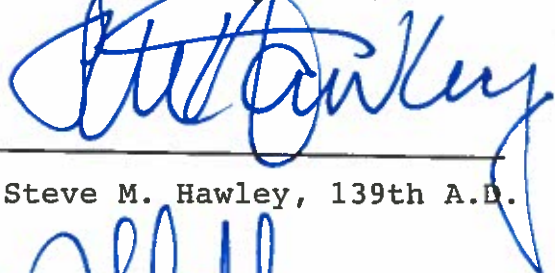
John J. Salka, 121st A.D.



Michael Reilly, Jr., 62nd A.D.



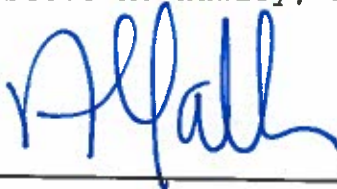
Michael A. Montesano, 15th A.D.



Steve M. Hawley, 139th A.D.



Melissa Miller, 20th A.D.



Nicole Malliotakis, 64th A.D.

CHIPS/BRIDGE FUNDING LETTER

Will Barclay

Will Barclay, 120th A.D.

Andrew R. Garbarino

Andrew R. Garbarino, 7th A.D.

Edward P. Ra

Edward P. Ra, 19th A.D.

David J. DiPietro

David J. DiPietro, 147th A.D.

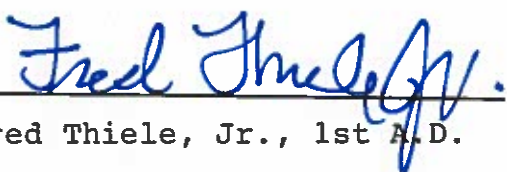
CHIPS/BRIDGE FUNDING LETTER



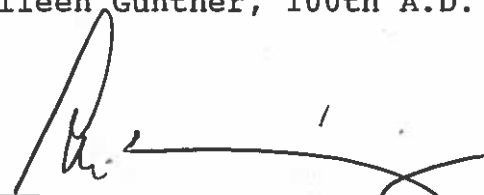
Thomas J. Abinanti, 92nd A.D.



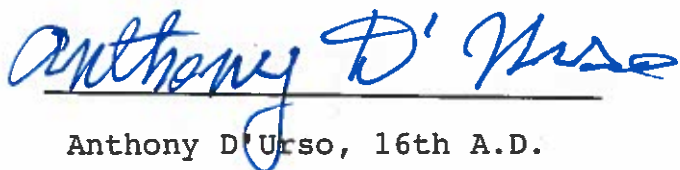
Aileen Gunther, 100th A.D.



Fred Thiele, Jr., 1st A.D.



Robin L. Schimminger, 140th A.D.



Anthony D'Urso, 16th A.D.



Sandra R. Galef, 95th A.D.



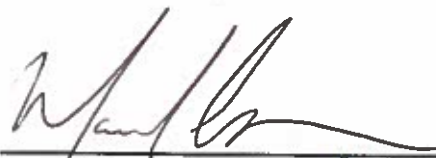
Kevin A. Cahill, 103rd A.D.



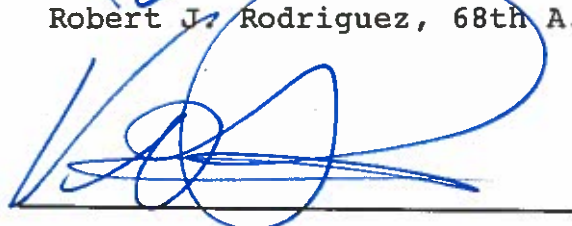
Steve Englebright, 4th A.D.



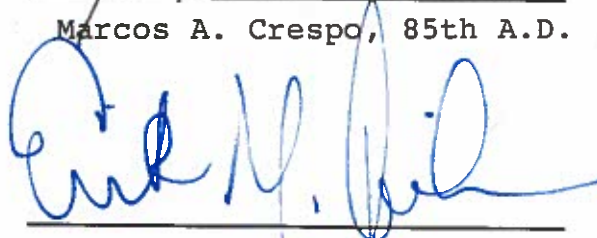
Robert J. Rodriguez, 68th A.D.



Marcos A. Crespo, 85th A.D.



Victor Pichardo, 86th A.D.

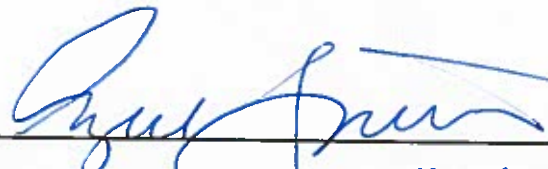


Erik Martin Dilan, 54th A.D.

CHIPS/BRIDGE FUNDING LETTER



Ron Kim, 40th A.D. *Kim*



Angelo Santabarbara, 11th A.D. *SANTABARBARA*

Summary of Senate Signees ~ CHIPS/Bridge/Culvert Funding

Senators:

Fred Akshar, 52nd SD
George A. Amedore, Jr., 46th SD
George M. Borrello, 57th SD
Phil Boyle, 4th SD
Rich Funke, 55th SD
Patrick M. Gallivan, 59th SD
Joseph A. Griffo, 47th SD
Pamela Helming, 54th SD
Chris Jacobs, 60th SD
Daphne Jordan, 43rd SD
Andrew J. Lanza, 24th SD
Kenneth P. LaValle, 1st SD
Betty Little, 45th SD
Thomas F. O'Mara, 58th SD
Robert G. Ortt, 62nd SD
Michael H. Ranzenhofer, 61st SD
Patty Ritchie, 48th SD
Joseph E. Robach, 56th SD
Sue Serino, 41st SD
James L. Seward, 51st SD
James Tedisco, 49th SD

Summary of Signatures for CHIPS/Bridge Funding (2020)

Assemblymembers:

Thomas J. Abinanti 92nd A.D.
Jake Ashby 107th A.D.
Will Barclay 120th A.D.
Kenneth D. Blankenbush 117th A.D.
Karl Brabenec 98th A.D.
Kevin M. Byrne 94th A.D.
Marjorie L. Byrnes 133rd A.D.
Kevin A. Cahill 103rd A.D.
Marcos A. Crespo 85th A.D.
Clifford W. Crouch 122nd A.D.
Joseph DeStefano 3rd A.D.
Erik Martin Dilan 54th A.D.
David J. DiPietro 147th A.D.
Anthony D'Urso 16th A.D.
Steve Englebright 4th A.D.
Gary D. Finch 126th A.D.
Michael J. Fitzpatrick 8th A.D.
Christopher Friend 124th A.D.
Sandra R. Galef 95th A.D.
Andrew Garbarino 7th A.D.
Joseph M. Giglio 148th A.D.
Andrew Goodell 150th A.D.
Aileen M. Gunther 100th A.D.
Stephen Hawley 139th A.D.
Mark Johns 135th A.D.
Ron Kim 40th A.D.
Brian M. Kolb 131st A.D.
Peter Lawrence 134th A.D.
Michael LiPetri 9th A.D.
Nicole Malliotakis 64th A.D.
Brian D. Manktelow 130th A.D.
David McDonough 14th A.D.
John Mikulin 17th A.D.
Brian D. Miller 101st A.D.
Melissa Miller 20th A.D.
Michael Montesano 15th A.D.
Angelo J. Morinello 145th A.D.
Michael J. Norris 144th A.D.
Philip A. Palmesano 132nd A.D.
Anthony H. Palumbo 2nd A.D.
Victor Pichardo 86th A.D.
Edward Ra 19th A.D.
Michael W. Reilly, Jr. 62nd A.D.
Robert Rodriguez 68th A.D.

John J. Salka 121st A.D.
Angelo Santabarbara 111th A.D.
Robin L. Schimminger 140th A.D.
Colin Schmitt 99th A.D.
Douglas Smith 5th A.D.
Robert Smullen 118th A.D.
Daniel Stec 114th A.D.
Christopher Tague 102nd A.D.
Fred W. Thiele Jr. 1st A.D.
Mark Walczyk 116th A.D.
Mary Beth Walsh 112th A.D.