



COMMISSIONERS OF CUMBERLAND COUNTY

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June 3, 2017

Cumberland County Secures PennDOT Commitment for I-81 Safety Improvements

At the urging of the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners, emergency first responders and local officials, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is moving forward with plans to install median barriers (both cable and fixed structure) to help prevent deadly crossover and head on collisions on Interstate 81.

The Commissioners have urged PennDOT to take action for some time ([see Resolution](#)). Many serious crashes and at least 14 deaths (according to the County coroner) from crossover crashes have occurred on I-81 in Cumberland County within the past five years.

While the Commissioners understand there is no perfect solution, or a quick fix to this issue, they express appreciation to PennDOT and, in particular, to PennDOT District 8 Executive Mike Keiser and his staff for developing a plan of action, and hosting the Commissioners, area state representatives, Cumberland County emergency service first responders and locally elected municipal officials to discuss the matter at the PennDOT maintenance building in Carlisle on March 30, 2017.

The plan of action includes:

- Median barriers in the area of the new construction, which is widening I-81 to three lanes in both directions between I-581 and PA 114.
- Cable median barriers on I-81 from the Franklin County line to the interchange with PA 233 (as part of a project being let this summer).
- Cable median barriers on I-81 from the Interchange with PA 944 to the river (as part of a project being let this summer).
- Cable median /standard guide rails (as needed and feasible) in and around the Carlisle area in the second four years (next construction season) of the 2017 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP).

For more detailed information, please view the presentation that was reviewed and discussed at the March 30 meeting with PennDOT ([view presentation](#)).

Also, see links to Media Coverage of the March 30, 2017 PennDOT meeting in Carlisle below:

http://www.pennlive.com/news/2017/03/pennDOT_committed_to_i-81_cros.html

http://cumberlink.com/news/local/communities/carlisle/cable-safety-barriers-planned-for-i--in-cumberland-county/article_453e184d-7a48-58a5-b3fd-df741d82bbac.html

<http://fox43.com/2017/03/30/penndot-plan-to-reduce-median-crossover-crashes-on-i-81/>

<http://abc27.com/2017/03/31/penndot-to-add-cable-median-barriers-to-part-of-i-81-in-cumberland-county/>

<http://local21news.com/news/local/penndot-outlines-plans-to-combat-crossover-crashes-on-i-81>

Ultimately, the Commissioners believe that I-81, which is already at capacity according to Keiser, is in dire need of a major upgrade to three lanes in both directions, from I-78 to the Maryland border.

Such a significant project, which won't get any cheaper as time passes, will require the federal government to walk the talk about the need for the enactment of a major infrastructure improvement bill and the funding to pay for it.

Pennsylvania has done its part with the passage of Act 89 of 2013.

For the safety of our motoring public, and our entire region and Pennsylvania's overall economy, the Commissioners believe it's time for the federal government to act.