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Transportation Leaders Rally for New York to Use Federal Funds on Urgent Road Repairs

**Coalition calls on Gov. Hochul to seize \$5 billion earmarked
for NYS under federal infrastructure plan**

TARRYTOWN, NY (Feb. 28, 2022)—Contracting executives and organized-labor leaders, representing thousands of members and employees from across New York State, met today with local, state and federal representatives to urge Gov. Kathy Hochul to seize a historic opportunity to fund and fix the state’s failing roads and bridges.

The press conference comes on the heels of a comprehensive analysis by CIC of the New York State Department of Transportation’s (NYSDOT) proposed five-year Capital Plan, which was included in the governor’s proposed FY 2022-23 budget. The group determined the governor’s plan falls far short to adequately pay for state needs in general and particularly those in the mid-Hudson Region where highways, bridges and local roads are the lifeblood of mobility for people, goods and services.

“If New York State makes the judicious decision to harness this additional federal aid, it will result in safer bridges and overpasses, create thousands of jobs, generate hundreds of millions of dollars in new tax revenues, and provide the resources for local and county municipalities to make our transportation safer and more reliable,” said John Cooney, Jr., executive director of the Construction Industry Council of Westchester & Hudson Valley, Inc. (CIC).

CIC is spearheading a campaign that kicked-off on Mon., Feb. 28, at a press conference at the

Teamsters & Chauffeurs Local 456 in Elmsford, N.Y. Local, state and federal representatives joined the conference and voiced support for investing in the state's infrastructure.

"I am very excited about this monumental funding and what it means for the future of the Hudson Valley and elsewhere in New York State," said U.S. Rep. Mondaire Jones (NY-17). "I will continue to work with my colleagues in government and labor to ensure that our region continues to receive the investments and support that we need not just to survive, but to thrive."

"New York is finally getting the funding it deserves, and we need to take advantage of the money and utilize it wisely," said Teamsters Local 456 President Louis Picani. "Simply put, the state's current proposal does not match our region's infrastructural needs. The restoration and repair of our roads and bridges directly connects to a strong local and state and economy and provides good paying jobs and a safe transportation network for our people."

Also attending the event were New York State Sens. Shelley B. Mayer, Sue Serino and Mike Martucci; Joe Paone, representing U.S. Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney (NY-18); Assemblymembers Jon Jacobson and Tom Abinanti; and County Legislators Vedat Gashi, Colin Smith and County MaryJane Shimsky.

"Investing in our roads, bridges and highways is critical for the health of our state's economy – we must make it a priority in the New York State budget," said Sen. Mayer. "I'm proud to stand with the Construction Industry Council of Westchester & Hudson Valley, Rebuild New York Now, Teamsters Local Union 456, Heavy Construction Laborers Local Union 60, Operating Engineers Local Union 137, and Building Laborers Local Unions 235 and 825."

New York State's share of the IIJA totals \$13.4 billion, a 52 percent increase, or \$4.675 billion, in federal aid to NYSDOT. Cooney noted that on paper, this is a historic increase of approximately \$1 billion a year in federal funding for New York roads and bridges. In addition, the state received in early 2021 a total of \$420 million directly paid to NYSDOT as part of federal Covid-relief programs. However, the proposed five-year NYSDOT Capital Plan proposes annual spending levels of \$6.5 billion between 2023-2027—taking into account inflation—which actually represents a significant decrease from the \$12 billion budgeted between 2020 and 2022.

"New York State clearly is not taking advantage of a generational increase in federal funding, but rather is choosing to pocket the increased funding and divert it to sectors where these federal monies will have much less impact on the long-term health of both our economy and transportation networks," Cooney said.

Sen. Mike Martucci said the state's infrastructure is in disrepair "not for lack of a trained, professional workforce, but because of consistent neglect on the part of Albany."

"With the largest state budget east of the Mississippi, we have the ability to double down on these federal funds, and we should. I encourage Governor Hochul to make this investment in our workers and our future. It will be a missed opportunity if we do not," Sen. Martucci said.

The following elected officials also voiced their support:

Senator Pete Harckham said “Robust investments in our roads and bridges and water infrastructure are critical for growing our economy and the creation of new good paying jobs. I will fight for every dollar of infrastructure investment in the Hudson Valley.”

Senator Daphne Jordan said, “Leveraging the Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to help increase state funding to repair our state’s roads, bridges, and highways, should be a bipartisan, common-sense priority. Repaired roads, better bridges, and modernized, 21st century highways benefit all New Yorkers, spur job creation, and foster long-term economic growth. I strongly support this bipartisan effort and will keep advocating for making these critical infrastructure investments in New York’s economy and future,”

Assemblyman Chris Burdick said “Our roads and bridges are crumbling. There is an urgent need for action now. While I commend Governor Hochul for her commitment to the state’s infrastructure, we need to do more. The Construction Industry Council’s proposed increase in funding level is a commonsense approach that helps to address the backlog of needs, capital repairs and replacements. I strongly support the higher funding levels and will advocate for them during the course of budget negotiations.”

Assemblyman Mike Lawler said, “With \$5 billion in federal funds coming to New York State from the bipartisan federal infrastructure bill, we must allocate this money towards state and local construction funding in order to improve our infrastructure in the Hudson Valley. Our roads, buildings, electrical lines, pipes, and other infrastructure are in sore need of repair and improvement, and there is no better time than now to allocate this \$5 billion windfall towards actual, physical improvements.”

Assemblyman Steve Otis said, “It is important that we maximize access to federal funds to support road and bridge projects. We are working with the construction industry, organized labor and colleagues in the legislature to support this effort.”

Greenburgh Town Supervisor Paul Feiner said, “We need help from Albany and Washington to address infrastructure needs. NYS owned roads within Greenburgh are in poor condition - many large potholes and craters. The town could use infrastructure financial help--we plan to finalize plans this year to build a new police station. We need funds from the state for pedestrian safety initiatives - sidewalks around town. We need help addressing flooding around town - drainage improvements and want to upgrade our water infrastructure. We need to invest in our infrastructure -which will make living in Westchester much more desirable for years to come.

Rebuild New York Now’s goal is to see the governor and state Legislature acknowledge the increased \$5 billion in federal transportation funding and match it dollar-for-dollar. They are advocating for a \$44.1 billion, five-year Capital Plan.

“Thanks to Senators Schumer and Gillibrand, Representatives Jones and Maloney and our Congressional Delegation, New York has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reverse the precipitous deterioration of roads and bridges across our state,” said Rebuild New York Now President Mike Elmendorf. “However, the proposed NYSDOT Capital Plan grows by less than half the amount of increased funding the Infrastructure Bill brings to New York. Now is the time for Albany to meet the commitment of the federal government and maintain or grow its investment in local roads and bridges, which will help bring jobs, save New Yorkers money and keep them safer. It’s just the right thing to do.”

New York State Infrastructure at a Glance:

- NYS’s pavement is steadily deteriorating – in just the past four years, drivers have seen nearly a 25 percent increase in the state’s poor and fair roads.
- The average annual extra cost of car repair and lost productivity in the Hudson Valley is \$1,839 . In the New York City region, it’s \$3,192, according to the TRIP report, January 2022.
- In a recent poll, 66% of respondents said New York State spends “too little” on transportation infrastructure. More than 73% “favor increasing” state funding for roads and bridges.

About Rebuild New York Now:

[Rebuild New York Now](#) is a broad-based coalition comprising members of the construction industry, organized labor and business enterprises, representing more than 30,000 workers and their families with the common goal of investing in infrastructure to ensure the safety and economic health of New York State. The Construction Industry Council of Westchester & Hudson Valley, Inc., is the leading voice for transportation construction and environmental infrastructure, as well as utilities and commercial development in the mid-Hudson region of New York State. CIC is aligned with the Building Contractors Association of Westchester & The Mid-Hudson Region, Inc., and more than 30 labor unions of the Building & Construction Trades Councils in a nine-county region. For information, visit cicbca.org.

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(From L to R) Senator Shelley Mayer, Assemblyman Tom Abinanti, Teamsters 456 President Louis Picani, Congressman Mondaire Jones, CIC Executive Director John Cooney, Jr.



(From L to R) Senator Mike Martucci, Senator Sue Serino, Senator Shelley Mayer, Teamsters Local 456 President Louis Picani, Assemblyman Tom Abinanti, Office of Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney representative Joe Paone, CIC Executive Director John Cooney, Jr., County Legislator MaryJane Shimsky, Assemblyman Jonathan Jacobson, Laborers Local 60 Business Manager Anthony Ascencao, IUOE Local 137 Business Manager Jeff Loughlin, County Legislator Colin Smith, County Legislator Vedat Gashi.



(From L to R): Dan Ortega, ELEC 825, Louis Picani, Teamsters Local 456, John Cooney, Jr. CIC, Jeff Loughlin, IUOE Local 137, Anthony Ascencao, Laborers Local 60.

Photos by John Vecchiolla