

Senator David Carlucci (38th District), Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins (35th District), Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti (92nd District), Assemblywoman Amy Paulin (88th District), Assemblyman Kenneth Zebrowski (94th District), Westchester County Executive Robert Astorino, Rockland County Executive C. Scott Vanderhoef, Greenburgh Town Supervisor Paul Feiner, Tarrytown Mayor Drew Fixell, Nyack Mayor Richard Kavesh, Elmsford Mayor Robert Williams

Amalgamated Transit Union, Bike Walk Alliance of Westchester & Putnam, Community Voices Heard, Empire State Future, Environmental Advocates of New York, Environmental Defense Fund, Federated Conservationists of Westchester County, Good Jobs New York, League of Women Voters of New York State, MTA Labor Coalition, Natural Resources Defense Council, New York Bicycling Coalition, New York State Transportation Equity Alliance, New York League of Conservation Voters, NYPIRG, Transportation Alternatives, Tri-State Transportation Campaign

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Transit-less Tappan Zee Bridge Would be Obsolete from Day One

*ELECTED OFFICIALS, GOOD GOVERNMENT, LABOR, EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATES
CALL ON STATE TO RESTORE TRANSIT TO THE TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE PLANS*

A bipartisan group of eleven elected officials and sixteen labor, environmental, equity, good government, and transportation organizations issued a joint statement today to request that the Tappan Zee Bridge be rebuilt with transit, specifically bus rapid transit. They said that the Tappan Zee Bridge must be replaced, but that a bridge without public transportation would gridlock the Hudson Valley's economy and do nothing to prevent rising traffic congestion and air pollution.

The diverse group said it is not enough to design the bridge so that transit can be accommodated at a later date. They indicated their belief that the bridge must accommodate bus rapid transit across the corridor the day the new bridge opens.

The New York State Department of Transportation had already selected an alternative for rebuilding the Tappan Zee Bridge that included public transportation, with bus rapid transit across the I-287 corridor and a future NYC-bound rail line from Rockland County. Over a ten year study period, a regional consensus developed that public transportation was necessary in the corridor. State studies repeatedly found that a Tappan Zee Bridge with transit was necessary to reduce increasing traffic and pollution and give Hudson Valley residents more transportation options. According to the state's own estimates, over 50,000 people would ride bus rapid transit across the corridor per day. A rail line from Rockland to New York City would attract an additional 29,000 riders. During every morning rush, a cross-corridor bus rapid transit line would save commuters 4,400 hours of travel time.

"It is essential that we include in any plan going forward a public transportation component that will ease the heavy congestion that plagues thousands of commuters each day," said **Senator David Carlucci** (38th District). "Working together with the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, Governor Cuomo and my colleagues in the legislature, I am confident that we can continue to move forward and make this critical project a gem for the Hudson Valley."

"Building a new Tappan Zee Bridge is a great opportunity to create jobs, develop our region's economy and bring our infrastructure into the 21st century. It is also an opportunity to make a tangible commitment to get people out of their cars, reduce traffic congestion, cut carbon emissions and foster sustainable economic growth in the Hudson Valley. Bus rapid transit offers a more affordable way to maximize the potential of this important project," said **Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins** (35th District).

"We need to move more people, not more cars," said **Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti** (92nd District). "Moving more cars across the bridge faster will just increase the traffic congestion in Westchester and degrade the environment and quality of life in our Westchester communities."

Assemblywoman Amy Paulin (88th District) stated, "Let's do this right from the beginning, and incorporate rapid bus transit into the Tappan Zee Bridge plans from the very start."

"A new Tappan Zee Bridge must contain Bus Rapid Transit from the start, otherwise economic growth, cleaner air and commuter concerns will all at be risk. The bridge needs to be built and built quickly, but the design must look forward, not back to the 1950's. In an iPad world, an 8-track bridge will be hopelessly obsolete before construction begins," said **Westchester County Executive Robert Astorino**.

"It is important for the region that a new Tappan Zee Bridge advance the construction of both transit and highway alternatives concurrently. Any alternative must preserve and enhance the quality of life of County residents for the next century, " said **Rockland County Executive C. Scott Vanderhoef**. "While we recognize that important timing

factors demand our focus on the basic construction of a new bridge, nonetheless, I feel the scope of the project needs to provide for a dedicated bus/BRT/HOV lane on the crossing, as well as a direct BRT connection from the crossing to the Tarrytown station.”

“It doesn’t make sense to replace a 1950s bridge with a 1980s bridge that is outdated before it even opens,” said **Greenburgh Town Supervisor Paul Feiner**.

“It’s crucial that the new Tappan Zee Bridge has a component for public transportation. We need to encourage people to get out of their cars.”

“While it is encouraging that the State's proposal for the TZB contains the capacity for future mass transit, the plan is incomplete without a solid commitment guaranteeing the near-term implementation of a true BRT system,” said **Tarrytown Mayor Drew Fixell**. “If the project is to be a true engine of future economic growth, it is imperative that it include this vital infrastructure improvement, as it is the one feature that will significantly reduce traffic congestion and therefore speed the flow of goods and people and increase efficiency.”

“It is imperative for mass transit to be an integral component of the Tappan Zee II project -- from the beginning,” said **Nyack Mayor Richard Kavesh**. “Building the bridge without transit might be more economically expedient, but without transit the new bridge will be obsolete from the very day that it opens.”

“The Village of Elmsford is grateful to the President and the Governor for fast tracking the Tappan Zee Bridge project, but we still respectfully request the state try harder to find funding for mass transit on the new bridge,” said **Elmsford Mayor Robert Williams**. “This is essential to decreasing vehicle traffic, which is better for the environment and will prolong the lifespan of the bridge. Further, we believe that transit will bring more business to both sides of the river by enabling people to get to places on both sides more easily.”

“Governor Cuomo must listen to the desires of Hudson Valley residents and put transit back in the Tappan Zee Bridge project,” said **Kate Slevin, executive director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign**. “In particular, bus rapid transit can serve as a focal point for transit-oriented development in the Hudson Valley and prevent sprawl.”

“Since the state and federal government are already planning to spend the time and money to build a new Tappan Zee Bridge, why not get it right the first time?” asked **Marcia Bystryn, president of the New York League of Conservation Voters**.

“Sustainable and affordable mass transit is more critical than ever to New York's labor market and economy. By incorporating mass transit features now, New York State can lead the way in design excellence and innovation. We strongly encourage Gov. Cuomo not to miss this once-in-a-generation opportunity and to show the rest of the nation how forward-thinking our state can be.”

“Anyone who says they want to fight for and represent middle class New Yorkers and communities of color in Westchester County needs to be in support of accessible, rapid

public transit so that those communities can continue to have their opportunity to experience the American dream in the great state of New York. That means supporting bus rapid transit with dedicated lanes on the Tappan Zee Bridge. It's the equitable thing to do to get all New Yorkers moving," says **Cecil D. Corbin-Mark, steering committee member, New York State Transportation Equity Alliance.**

"Excluding or delaying public transit from a rebuilt Tappan Zee Bridge is an insult to hard working New Yorkers that don't have or can't afford cars," said **Bettina Damiani of Good Jobs New York.** "Governor Cuomo must keep a public transportation component part of this development to ensure everyone living and working in the region benefits."

"Every investment New York makes in rapid transit is a wise one," said **David Gahl, associate director of Environmental Advocates of New York.** "Public transportation reduces the pollution that causes climate change, takes cars off the road, and cuts air pollution."

"How can Governor Cuomo propose to not include public transportation in a plan to rebuild the Tappan Zee Bridge?" said **Darlene Griffin, Newburgh chapter leader of Community Voices Heard.** "We need those jobs, we need that transportation for people to see their families. We do not support a plan that does not include jobs and transportation!"

"Robert Caro won a Pulitzer Prize describing how Robert Moses had made Long Islanders lives comparable to those of "19th century Russian peasants," by building highways that excluded transit," said **Larry Hanley, international president of the Amalgamated Transit Union.** "Governor Cuomo should consider his legacy when contemplating issues that are really this large---in the long term. This is about how New Yorkers will live, perhaps for the next 100 years."

"Public transportation across the corridor will encourage smart growth and sustainable development near transit and protect the Hudson Valley from more sprawl," says, **Rich Kassel, senior attorney at Natural Resources Defense Council.**

"We urge the Governor to take a step back and include mass transit in the Tappan Zee Bridge replacement and pursue a process that is more open, transparent and responsive to the desires of New Yorkers," said **JP Patafio on behalf of the MTA Labor Coalition.** He also urged the state to make sure that biking and walking are accommodated on the new bridge.

"A 'Fix-it-First' policy for infrastructure is not a license to speed. Nor does it convey justification to use public (or public-private) funds sub-optimally," said **Peter Fleischer, executive director of Empire State Future,** a coalition of 52 business, civic and environmental groups statewide. "If New York State is going to rapidly spend billions on a bridge that we will need for decades, a proper consideration of drivers, public transit passengers and future regional land uses is required. Without that, congestion will

undermine the improvement. Resultant sprawl will create new suburban and urban problems. Non-drivers' needs will be neglected. That new bridge will be a monument to what we could have, and probably should have, done.”

"Including a robust transit service in the new Tappan Zee Bridge will provide great improvements in safety and mobility to Hudson Valley bicyclists,” said **Brian Kehoe, executive director of the New York Bicycling Coalition**. “Bicycle commuting is increasingly popular and cost effective. Properly equipped buses will allow workers to ride their bicycles from home to the bus stop and to then ride the bus to work. More people will therefore utilize transit in the corridor which will further reduce congestion and wasted time.”

“We need to plan for both the present and the future. We need to ensure the new Tappan Zee Bridge can serve a growing population, and address the issues of higher fuel costs, and global climate change,” said **Steven J. Levy, president of Federated Conservativists of Westchester County**. “BRT shouldn't need to be discussed at this point as it should automatically be included on any new bridge. We need to set our sights on including rail mass transit to connect to the MTA New Haven line. The time to implement the capacity for multi-modal solutions is now, and not as a possible future expansion that may not occur.”

“Bus rapid transit lanes on a new Tappan Zee crossing are key to solving the region's congestion woes,” said **Gene Russianoff, mass transit coordinator for the New York Public Interest Research Group**.

"Building the Tappan Zee without public transit access is unacceptable," said **Paul Steely White, executive director of Transportation Alternatives**. "A rail or bus-link would cut down on congestion and promote sustainable growth from the Hudson Valley to New York City."

“Transit on the Tappan Zee is essential for the development of our multi-modal transportation system,” said **David Wilson, executive director of the Bike Walk Alliance of Westchester & Putnam**. “A bridge built without it will be obsolete the day it opens.”

“This state’s history is rife with stories of missed opportunities. It is time to bite the bullet and do what we all agree is necessary to maintain the viability of downstate as a place to live and work,” said **Betsey Swan, President of the League of Women Voters of New York State**.