



The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
 Governor of New York State  
 Executive Chamber  
 State Capitol  
 Albany, New York 12224

November 2, 2015



**RE: Transportation Funding Parity**

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We congratulate you on the historic agreement reached to provide an additional \$8.3 billion to meet the needs of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Capital Program over the next five years. This critical investment will build a safer, stronger, more reliable transit system for the MTA, which serves as the backbone of the greater New York City region's economy. That said, it is only the

first of two essential steps to meet New York's serious infrastructure needs. State and local roads, bridges and other transportation systems such as airports and rail also serve as the economic and social backbone for the entire state of New York and our nation—and have very significant needs that must be met as well.

There is wide spread agreement among elected officials and the public that New York needs to invest in its infrastructure if we are going to remain competitive and create jobs because our crumbling roads and bridges are in serious need of attention and, more importantly, are in serious need of a multi-billion dollar capital commitment from the State. As you noted yourself last year in your “Opportunity Agenda,” New York has 6,000 bridges and 60% of our roads that are in need of repair or reconstruction. An October 26 Siena College poll showed that an overwhelming 71% of New Yorkers support equitable funding for transit and roads and bridges. Collectively, we urge you to include funding parity between the capital plans of the Metropolitan Transit Authority and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) in the 2016-17 Executive Budget.

In the early 1990's, Governor Mario Cuomo and Legislature created the Dedicated Highway and Bridge Trust Fund (DHBTF) to pay for the NYSDOT capital program and the Dedicated Mass Transit Trust Fund (DMTTF) to assist with the MTA and other transit systems' capital programs. At that time, statewide drivers were asked to have a portion of their gas taxes and auto fees directed toward the DMTTF. In return, it was agreed that the DOT and MTA's five year capital programs would be similar in size and would be negotiated simultaneously—the concept broadly referred to as “parity.” From then through 2005-09, both five-year capital programs were similar in size and adopted within months of each other. In 2009-10, the Executive and Legislature enacted a five-year capital program for the MTA but not the DOT, breaking parity. Since that time, investment in transit has outpaced investment in roads and bridges by some \$6 billion.

A fully funded 5-year capital plan for the New York State Department of Transportation will be a significant step toward rebuilding and modernizing New York's state and local transportation infrastructure, creating jobs and sustaining economic development. For each \$1 billion invested in infrastructure, some 28,000 jobs are created or supported. The entire system of roads and bridges requires a long-term commitment to ensure that the needs of our ailing infrastructure are met.

The unprecedented coalition of organizations signatory to this letter represent diverse industries and constituencies, and from time to time have been known to differ on issues. On the matter of infrastructure, however, we are united because all of us recognize that our economy and communities cannot function without safe and reliable infrastructure. Simply put, New York cannot be open for business if our roads and bridges are closed.

Infrastructure is literally the lifeblood of our communities. We rely upon it for our farmers to get their goods to market and for customers to get to our businesses. We count on it to get our kids safely to and from school—or our loved ones to a hospital in the event of an emergency. Modern infrastructure in a state of good repair is safer and decreases costs on motorists. The highly respected national transportation research organization TRIP last year reported, “additional vehicle operating costs borne by New York motorists as a result of poor road conditions is \$6.3 billion annually.” Better infrastructure is

also better for the environment as it reduces excess motor fuel consumption that results from delays, congestion and detours. And, as we saw so clearly in the extreme weather events such as Sandy, Irene and Lee, which have become more common of late in New York, newer infrastructure in a better state of repair is far more resilient.

The agreement you achieved to fund the MTA Capital Program presents a once in a generation opportunity to also meet the needs of the rest of New York's transportation infrastructure. We are confident that your leadership can make that happen and look forward to working with you and your Administration to get it done.

Sincerely,



John A. Corlett  
Legislative Committee Chairman, AAA



Michael J. Elmendorf II  
President & CEO, AGC NYS



Dottie Gallagher-Cohen  
President & CEO, Buffalo Niagara Partnership



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Regional Manager, Northeast Regional  
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Ross Pepe  
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Gary Hill  
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Infrastructure Revenue



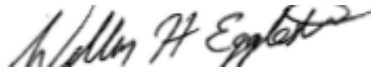
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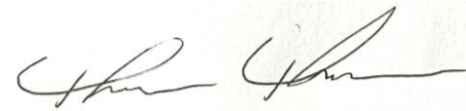
William H. Eggleston III  
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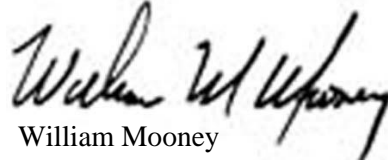
Unshackle Upstate

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Chairman, Rebuild NY Now



William Mooney  
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