

Governors Christie And Cuomo Send Joint Letter To President Obama Regarding New Trans-Hudson Commuter Rail Tunnel

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Governor Chris Christie
State of New Jersey



Governor Andrew M. Cuomo
State of New York

Governors Seek To Break Logjam And Put Forward Bipartisan Funding Proposal That Is "Realistic, Appropriate And Fair"

Trenton, NJ – Today, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie and New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo sent a letter to President Barack Obama outlining a viable funding framework to break the logjam over funding for a new trans-Hudson commuter rail tunnel – a critical infrastructure project of regional and national economic importance.

State and federal officials have long acknowledged the need for action on a new tunnel, and today's proposal presents a fair funding solution that calls for a federal grant commitment of 50 percent of the project's total cost with New York, New Jersey, and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) taking responsibility for developing a financing plan for the other half. The new tunnel is essential to the region, and this bipartisan proposal is designed to break through the logjam that has delayed its construction in the past. As the two Governors wrote:

"We are writing jointly in an attempt to move the stalled project forward by putting a funding proposal on the table that we believe is realistic, appropriate and fair: split the responsibility for the cost. If the federal government will provide grants to pay for half of the cost of the project, the Port Authority, New York and New Jersey will take responsibility for developing a funding plan for the other half, convening all relevant agencies, and utilizing the proposed federal low-interest loan, local funding sources, and other funding strategies necessary to complement the federal grant commitment. This funding framework is comparable to previous structures proposed for a new tunnel."

Today's bipartisan proposal represents a workable funding formula that builds on the collaborative efforts and input of state and federal elected officials from New Jersey and New York:

"However, the key step to building a new tunnel is a realistic financial plan and commitment by the federal government. We have both been in touch with our respective Congressional delegations. In New York, Senator Schumer has stated that he is committed to making the project a reality and has identified a number of federal sources of funding. In New Jersey, Senator Booker and Senator Menendez convened a meeting on the project, and are committed to finding federal funding. The congressional delegations of New York and New Jersey are united in a manner we have rarely seen before."

In addition to presenting this realistic plan, the governors also requested that federal environmental and planning approvals be expedited in order to move forward as quickly as possible, and both governors made a commitment to do the same with similar state-level reviews.

The letter, which can be found as a PDF attachment to this release, was delivered to the White House this morning.

The Letter To President Obama [pdf 468kB]

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