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Governor Christie Highlights Quality of Life Improvements With Transportation Trust Fund Work

Tuesday, May 09, 2017

Tags: [Jobs and the Economy](#)

Interstate 80 Bridge Repair Underway, Increasing Safety and Creating Jobs For New Jersey

Trenton, NJ – Highlighting his commitment to critical infrastructure improvements that increase safety for all drivers, while also providing valuable construction jobs, Governor Chris Christie today viewed the progress of the \$5 million Interstate 80 bridge repair project in Passaic County, funded by the state's Transportation Trust Fund (TTF).

The New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) work on the bridge, which spans the Passaic River from Woodland Park to Totowa Borough, includes fatigue crack and long-term retrofit repairs at each of the bridge's intermediate cross-frame connections to its steel girders. This will transfer and reduce the load on the bridge and will maintain and prevent future fatigue and stress to the structure while increasing safety for the 130,000 vehicles that cross the 767-foot long bridge every day.

"All over New Jersey, you can see your tax dollars at work improving the lives of all state citizens, thanks to the bipartisan, tax-cutting Transportation Trust Fund I signed last October," said Governor Christie. "Projects underway all over the state such as the I-80 bridge repair in Passaic County enhance safety, make commuting easier and smoother, and create construction jobs that are themselves the foundation of our economy."

New Jersey's bridge deck area is at 93 percent acceptable condition. During the Christie Administration, the NJDOT has invested more than \$4.4 billion in bridge rehabilitation and reconstruction. The TTF renewal also focuses on improving county-owned bridges by increasing funding for the Local Bridges, Future Needs program from \$25 million a year to \$44 million each year. The additional funding allows counties to repair, rehabilitate, or reconstruct even more bridges under their jurisdiction.

Currently, 925 TTF-funded NJDOT projects are underway in New Jersey. The NJDOT has 11 TTF-funded and 18 additional road maintenance and replacement projects in design or under construction in Passaic County, including the on-going Route 3/Route 46 improvements designed to alleviate congestion in that heavily traveled corridor.

The TTF will contribute \$2 billion annually into New Jersey's transportation infrastructure and facilitate a \$32 billion investment of federal and state funds over eight years. This includes \$400 million in supplemental funding this year that the Governor requested for immediate action on multiple projects. The Governor allocated \$260 million for repairing local roads and bridges in all 21 counties as well as \$140 million to the New Jersey Transit Corporation for implementing technology and system safety improvements.

The TTF legislation, signed by Governor Christie in 2016, represented the first broad-based tax cut since 1994 and included:

- Cutting the sales tax, which decreased from 7 percent to 6.875 percent this year and will go down to 6.625 percent January 1, 2018;
- Increasing the Earned Income Tax Credit for the working poor to 35 percent of the federal benefit;
- Increasing the New Jersey gross income tax exclusion on pension and retirement income over four years to \$100,000 for joint filers, \$75,000 for individuals and \$50,000 for married/filing separately; the estate tax is being eliminated as of January 1, 2018; and
- Giving veterans honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service in the

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Armed Forces of the United States, a reserve component thereof, or the National Guard of New Jersey in a federal active duty status a personal exemption of \$3,000 on state income taxes.

Even with a 23-cent a gallon increase being used to replenish the TTF, New Jersey's average price per gallon of gas has remained lower than our neighbors in New York, Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

Through the TTF and its tax fairness component, New Jerseyans will pay hundreds less in taxes each year while also dedicating money to roads and mass transit. These tax cuts are estimated to save taxpayers \$164 million this year and, when fully phased-in by 2021, an estimated \$1.4 billion.

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