

# Governor Christie Stresses Bus Safety In Transportation Trust Fund Spending

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## NJ TRANSIT Installing 360-Degree Cameras to Protect Pedestrians, Riders, Motorists

**Trenton, NJ** – Stressing improved safety as a key goal of the state’s Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) projects, Governor Chris Christie today visited a New Jersey Transit (NJ TRANSIT) maintenance facility in Newark to announce new 360-degree cameras on buses that will protect pedestrians, riders and motorists by increasing bus drivers’ awareness of their surroundings.

“Public safety improves greatly when bus drivers have a more complete view of what is happening around their buses, lessening the chance of a variety of accidents with pedestrians, cyclists and other vehicles. This new technology will enhance operator awareness and support their defensive and safe driving skills,” said Governor Christie. “TTF funding is critical in our efforts to protect the welfare of riders and provide them with a comfortable and carefree travel experience.”

Governor Christie signed in October a historic bipartisan, tax-cutting Transportation Trust Fund replenishment, to contribute \$2 billion annually into New Jersey’s transportation infrastructure and create 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. That supplemental funding provided \$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 safety, technology and system expansion improvements.

The \$29.1 million 360-degree camera system will be installed in 2,500 new and existing NJ TRANSIT buses to provide operators with a 360-degree field of vision around the bus that will help to eliminate blind spots and enhance pedestrian safety. Each new bus that is delivered as part of ongoing equipment procurement will already be equipped with this technology, while existing buses will be retrofitted. The project will be implemented starting in Fiscal Year 2018.

The 360-degree camera system utilizes four external ultrawide-angle cameras mounted on the front, rear and sides of the bus that capture the surrounding areas of the vehicle, including blind spots. Each camera covers one full side of the vehicle, with a viewing angle of more than 180 degrees. The four live images are then simultaneously sent to an electronic control unit, where they are processed, combined, blended and stitched into a single image, as well as corrected to accommodate any distortion from the wide-angle camera lens. This single image is displayed on a monitor to give the operator a real-time “bird’s-eye” view of the vehicle.

“Presenting all-around visibility in one image saves the operator from having to process information from several mirrors in quick succession, making it easier to identify possible hazards,” said Steven H. Santoro, NJ TRANSIT Executive Director. “We began testing the camera program in March and feedback from drivers has been positive.”

In addition to the 360-degree bus camera project, NJ TRANSIT will roll out seven additional safety and technology projects in the coming year, including an enhanced “MyTix” electronic, mobile ticketing application that will increase functionality and intermodal ticketing options. NJ TRANSIT also is preparing to begin preliminary engineering and design on a significant expansion of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail/Route 440 and the TTF supplemental funding will

continue progress on the development of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail Northern Branch expansion and Camden-Glassboro light rail projects. In all, the supplemental funding will pay for 14 public transit projects.

There are approximately 925 TTF-funded Department of Transportation (NJDOT) projects going on around the state, including 59 bridge, road, and freight rail projects under the \$260 million in supplemental funding. As of last week, eight of the 59 NJDOT projects were completed with approximately a dozen currently under construction and five in a substantial design phase. In total, more than \$10 million has been invested in these important infrastructure improvements to date.

The October TTF legislation represents the first broad-based tax cut since 1994 by:

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;

Eliminating New Jersey's Estate Tax as of January 1, 2018; and

Giving veterans honorably discharged or released under honorable circumstances from active service in the 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.

This tax fairness will save New Jerseyans hundreds of dollars in annual taxes, while also dedicating money to road, bridge and mass transit improvements that stand to save the average New Jersey driver approximately \$600 per year. These tax cuts are estimated to save taxpayers \$164 million this year and, when fully phased-in by 2021, an estimated \$1.4 billion.

Even with a 23-cent per 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.

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