

Governor Christie: This Plan Gets Our Road, Bridge And Mass Transit Needs Done

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Transcript:

Governor Christie: It's been my pleasure for my last seven years as governor to see us spend over \$20 billion between state and federal resources on the infrastructure of the state, on our mass transit systems and helping out our municipalities do the very same thing with their local roads. The plan that we put in place five years ago was running out time and it was running out of money. And so we started to work, this past spring and summer and unfortunately to the chagrin of some, into the fall to try to come up with a package that would make sense for New Jersey's long-term future. So working with all the leaders in the legislature, we were able to do that. We were able to finally able to put our TTF on a solid financial footing, with the increase of the gas tax. And just as importantly, we were able to come to an agreement reducing taxes that were hurting families across this state as well at the very same time. That's what bipartisanship is all about. Everybody doesn't get everything they want, but everybody gets some of what they need, and that's what we did with this bill. And so I always said I was willing to increase the gas tax. I've been telling ray that for years but I told him it had to be tax fairness. And I know, whether it was Ray, whether it was Bobby Bryant or Nelson Ferreira or a whole bunch of my other friends in this business, they all thought I wasn't going to do it. I know, you all were doubting me, I know it. You all thought I wasn't going to do it, but I'll tell you this, I told you, I gave you my word. And I think one things that's been a hallmark of this administration, and some people like it and some people don't, depending on what I'm giving my word on, is when I say I'm going to do something I will do it, and when I say I won't, I won't. Now sometimes it takes a little bit longer and sometimes it's a little messier, sometimes you all like it done a little more quickly, but in the end what matters is what gets done. And I'd like to point out to all those people who are critical of the gas tax, that even after our increase of the gas tax, our gas tax and our

average price per gallon, still has remained significantly lower than New York, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut and if you have any doubt about that, still watch all the cars come across those bridges around here from Pennsylvania to buy their gas in New Jersey and then go back. So now we have an eight-year plan as well, that's really good news. We've never had longer than a five year plan. Now we have an eight year plan here's why that's so important, because I'm leaving and you don't know what you're going to get next, believe me you don't know what you're going to get next. And so we wanted to try to take as much of the politics out of this as we possibly could, and so a new Governor coming in in his or her first four years they're not going to want to do something on the gas tax again. They're not going to want to do something on infrastructure again. So this eight-year plan now takes us all the way out to 2024. That's going to last through almost the next eight years of the new administration, and so it's important for us to have done that and it was one of the things that the Senate President and the Speaker and the leaders, Republican leaders in the Legislature agreed upon. We needed to make sure we took more of the politics out of this business, because building roads, building bridges, resurfacing roads, resurfacing bridges, and building train systems, isn't a Republican or Democrat idea. Republicans, Democrats, Independents and everybody else rides on those roads and rides on those trains. Now, they don't care who's taking the credit, they just want it done and this plan helps to get it done. So that's the first time in history that we have that.

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