

## Governor Phil Murphy

# Remarks by Governor Murphy on the Portal North Bridge Event with President Biden

10/25/2021

### Remarks by Governor Murphy on the Portal North Bridge Event with President Biden

#### NJ TRANSIT Meadowlands Maintenance Complex, Kearny

##### **\*As Prepared for Delivery\***

Good afternoon!

Today is a great day for New Jersey and the entirety of the Northeast Corridor. It's a great day for our commuters, and, indeed, for our common economic future.

And not just because we have the tremendous honor to welcome the President of the United States!

We are also with members of our Congressional delegation – Senator Menendez, Representatives Pallone, Pascrell, Payne, Sires, Watson Coleman, Norcross, Gottheimer, Sherrill, and Malinowski ...

My partners in governing Senate President Steve Sweeney, Speaker Craig Coughlin ...

And many of our partners from organized labor, represented in today's program by Joseph Williams with SMART Local 800.

With the support of everyone here, starting with President Biden, we are ready to move forward on the much needed and long-awaited replacement of the outdated Portal Bridge.

Mr. President, there are few individuals who understand the importance of ensuring modern, safe, and reliable transportation infrastructure more than you.

It is why I am so proud to support the bipartisan infrastructure bill that is a cornerstone of your agenda and our nation's economic future.

And it is why I am so grateful for the support you and your team, and Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and his, have given to not just the Portal North Bridge project, but the even bigger one waiting for us just up the tracks – the construction of a new rail tunnel under the Hudson.

For upwards of 200,000 daily riders – whether they be on Amtrak or NJ TRANSIT – the approach to the Portal Bridge often comes with a crossing of fingers, a deep breath, and maybe short prayer that the span will be operational and allow the train to cross.

When it works, the Northeast Corridor fully functions. People get to work on-time. Our economy moves forward.

When it doesn't, the Northeast Corridor, the people it carries, and all the economic activity it supports, comes to a screeching halt. Over the recent past, that's happened more and more often.



The impacts of these stoppages aren't relegated to just Newark and New York – they very easily radiate up and down the rails, impacting service from Boston all the way to Washington.

And the delays aren't just counted in minutes or hours lost in time that should be spent with one's family, but in millions of dollars of economic activity lost.

President Biden is our nation's 46th president. The Portal Bridge was opened during the term of our 27th. Let that one sink in for a second.

Next month will mark the bridge's 111th birthday. It was built in the dawn of the 20th century. It has more than served its times and its purpose. Now, it is time for us to give our region the modern, safe, and reliable infrastructure that a 21st century economy demands. And that's exactly what the entirety of the Gateway Program will do.

In the process, we'll be creating good, union construction jobs whose efforts will, in turn, support even more jobs up and down the entirety of the Northeast Corridor. And we'll also be showing the rest of the country just how vital it is that we have transportation infrastructure every bit as strong as our people and which can turn our greatest economic aspirations into reality.

Every dollar we invest in the new Portal North Bridge, and in Gateway beyond, is going to be magnified many, many times over.

In gained productivity from a workforce that can get where it needs to safely and on time ...

In greater value to businesses located where their connection to the markets they need for their success is secure ...

And in a stronger, fairer, and more resilient economy.

Those who look at our current infrastructure needs and only see a number and a dollar sign on a page, or just the colors red and blue, are totally missing the point.

The cost of our inaction far outpaces the cost of getting shovels in the ground today. The cost of inaction is in jobs lost, in economic growth forgone, and in an ultimately weaker and less-competitive America.

Those people live up to the words of the poet and playwright Oscar Wilde – who died only 11 years before the Portal Bridge opened, by the way – “A cynic knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.”

Today, Mr. President, we are with you to show the value of safe, modern, and reliable infrastructure.

And we are more than honored to have you joining us to highlight one of the most consequential infrastructure projects in our entire nation so far this century.

Thank you.

It is now my pleasure to introduce one of our state's greatest champions in Washington, Congressman Bill Pascrell.



## Governor Murphy Announces Over \$100 Million Investment in Urban Parks, Playgrounds, and Open Spaces Across New Jersey

Governor Phil Murphy, alongside New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette and Senator Brian P. Stack, announced a proposed investment of over \$100 million in urban parks, playgrounds, open spaces, and other local park improvement projects through the Green Acres Program.

“With these investments, we will take another significant step toward ensuring all New Jersey communities have access to recreational opportunities and enjoy the benefits of natural resource conservation,” **said Governor Murphy.** “The proposed projects will provide equitable and meaningful access to urban parks, help address the impacts of climate change, and advance our long-term resilience goals. Investing in our communities through these projects will improve the quality of life for families living across New Jersey now and in the future.”

[READ MORE \(HTTPS://NJ.GOV/GOVERNOR/NEWS/NEWS/562021/APPROVED/20211020A.SHTML \)](https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/approved/20211020a.shtml)

---

## Governor Murphy Recognizes 11th New Class of NJ TRANSIT Locomotive Engineers

Governor Phil Murphy, NJDOT Commissioner and NJ TRANSIT Board Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti and NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin S. Corbett recognized NJ TRANSIT’s latest Locomotive Engineer training class for finalizing their formal classroom training and passing the Northeast Operating Rules of Advisory Committee (NORAC) and physical characteristics exams.



"At the start of our Administration, we took over an NJ TRANSIT that was hobbled by years of dysfunction, underfunding, and a lack of strategic planning," **said Governor Murphy.** "Four years later, NJ TRANSIT has 127 new locomotive engineers, completed PTC, and drastically improved metrics across the board. New Jersey commuters are benefitting every day from the reforms, revamps, and rebuilding that we have undertaken. I look forward to the future service of these dedicated engineers as part of a new era at NJ TRANSIT."

[READ MORE \(HTTPS://NJ.GOV/GOVERNOR/NEWS/NEWS/562021/APPROVED/20211021A.SHTML \)](https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/approved/20211021a.shtml)

## Governor Murphy Announces Newark's Designation as a Transit Village

Governor Murphy and New Jersey Department of Transportation Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti announced that the City of Newark in Essex County has been designated as a Transit Village, making it the 34th municipality to be recognized since the program began in 1999.

"Newark has been undergoing a renaissance for the past several years, and this designation is a recognition of the city's continued growth, revitalization, and success," **said Governor Murphy.** "Our Administration stands as a ready and committed partner to the City of Newark, and this initiative will stand to assist the City in it's efforts to continue



groundbreaking and transformative development that is accessible to public transportation and some of our state's greatest cultural treasures. None of this would be possible without the leadership of Mayor Baraka and many other dedicated stakeholders."

[READ MORE \(HTTPS://NJ.GOV/GOVERNOR/NEWS/NEWS/562021/APPROVED/20211022A.SHTML \)](https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/approved/20211022a.shtml)

## Governor Murphy Signs Executive Order Instituting Vaccination or Testing Requirement for State Contracted Employees

Governor Phil Murphy signed Executive Order No. 271, which requires new and potential state contractors to demonstrate that all of their employees who enter, work at, or provide services in any state agency location are fully vaccinated or otherwise undergo weekly testing.

"This executive order will bring state contractors in line with the requirements set for all direct state employees," **said Governor Murphy.** "Quite simply, we must ensure that everyone providing service to the people of New Jersey is being held to the same public health safety and standards."

[READ MORE \(HTTPS://NJ.GOV/GOVERNOR/NEWS/NEWS/562021/APPROVED/20211020C.SHTML \)](https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/approved/20211020c.shtml)



## New Jersey to Invest \$634M to Enhance Medicaid Services for Older Adults and Individuals with Disabilities

Acting Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman announced the federal government has approved Department plans to invest \$634 million over the next three years to bolster efforts to strengthen and expand home and community-based Medicaid services for older adults and individuals with disabilities.

“We are prioritizing independence, community options and person-centered care,” **Acting Commissioner Adelman said.** “Importantly, this plan was devised with significant public input gathered during group calls, a public listening session and emails. It was vital that we listen and take advantage of this opportunity to make New Jersey a stronger and more resilient place to live. This plan reflects that goal, and we’re thrilled by the approval.”

[READ MORE \(HTTPS://WWW.STATE.NJ.US/HUMANSERVICES/NEWS/PRESSRELEASES/2021/APPROVED/20211020.HTML \)](https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/news/pressreleases/2021/approved/20211020.html)



# NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

---

## Governor Phil Murphy

[Home \(/governor/\)](#)

### Administration

[Governor Phil Murphy \(/governor/admin/about/\)](#)

[Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver \(/governor/admin/lt/\)](#)

[First Lady Tammy Snyder Murphy \(/governor/admin/fl/\)](#)

[Cabinet \(/governor/admin/cabinet/\)](#)

[Office of Health Care Affordability and Transparency \(/governor/admin/affordablehealthcare/index.shtml\)](#)

[Boards, Commissions & Authorities \(/governor/admin/bca/\)](#)

[Internship Opportunities \(/governor/admin/internship.shtml\)](#)

[Governor's Residence - Drumthwacket \(http://drumthwacket.org/\)](http://drumthwacket.org/)

### Key Initiatives

[Economy & Jobs \(/governor/initiatives/#Economy\)](#)

[Education \(/governor/initiatives/#Education\)](/governor/initiatives/#Education)

[Environment \(/governor/initiatives/#Environment\)](/governor/initiatives/#Environment)

[Health \(/governor/initiatives/#Health\)](/governor/initiatives/#Health)

[Law & Justice \(/governor/initiatives/#Justice\)](/governor/initiatives/#Justice)

[Transportation \(/governor/initiatives/#Transportation\)](/governor/initiatives/#Transportation)

## News & Events

[Press Releases \(/governor/news/news/562022/approved/news\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/news/562022/approved/news_archive.shtml)

[Photos \(https://www.flickr.com/photos/govmurphy\)](https://www.flickr.com/photos/govmurphy)

[Public Addresses \(/governor/news/addresses\)](/governor/news/addresses)

[Executive Orders \(/infobank/eo/056murphy/approved/eo\\_archive.html\)](/infobank/eo/056murphy/approved/eo_archive.html)

[Administrative Orders \(/governor/news/ao/approved/ao\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/ao/approved/ao_archive.shtml)

[Direct Appointments \(/governor/news/appointments\)](/governor/news/appointments)

[Advice and Consent Appointments \(/governor/news/acappointments\)](/governor/news/acappointments)

[Statements on Legislation \(/governor/news/statements/approved/statements\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/statements/approved/statements_archive.shtml)

[Administration Reports \(/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/adminreports/approved/archive.shtml)

[Transition Reports \(/governor/news/reports/approved/reports\\_archive.shtml\)](/governor/news/reports/approved/reports_archive.shtml)

[Press Kits \(/governor/news/press\)](/governor/news/press)

## Social

[Facebook \(https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/\)](https://www.facebook.com/governorphilmurphy/)

[Twitter \(https://twitter.com/GovMurphy\)](https://twitter.com/GovMurphy)

[Instagram \(https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/\)](https://www.instagram.com/govmurphy/)

[Snapchat \(https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy\)](https://www.snapchat.com/add/philmurphy)

[YouTube \(https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice\)](https://www.youtube.com/njgovernorsoffice)

[TikTok \(https://www.tiktok.com/@njgov?\)](https://www.tiktok.com/@njgov?)

## Contact Us

[Scheduling Requests \(/governor/contact/scheduling/\)](/governor/contact/scheduling/)

[Contact Us \(/governor/contact/all/\)](/governor/contact/all/)

## Statewide

**[NJ Home \(//www.nj.gov\)](http://www.nj.gov)**

**[Services A to Z \(//www.nj.gov/nj/gov/njgov/alphaserv.html\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/njgov/alphaserv.html)**

**[Departments/Agencies \(//www.nj.gov/nj/gov/deptserv/\)](http://www.nj.gov/nj/gov/deptserv/)**

**[FAQs \(//www.nj.gov/faqs/\)](https://www.nj.gov/faqs/)**

**[Contact Us \(//www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html\)](https://www.nj.gov/nj/feedback.html)**

**[Privacy Notice \(//www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html\)](https://www.nj.gov/nj/privacy.html)**

**[Legal Statement & Disclaimers \(//www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html\)](https://www.nj.gov/nj/legal.html)**

**[Accessibility Statement \(//www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html\)](https://www.nj.gov/nj/accessibility.html)**

[\(//nj.gov/opra/\)](https://nj.gov/opra/)

[\(https://my.state.nj.us/openam/UI/Login\)](https://my.state.nj.us/openam/UI/Login)

Copyright © State of New Jersey, 1996-2023  
Office of Governor PO Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
609-292-6000

[\(https://tech.nj.gov/\)](https://tech.nj.gov/)