



**Testimony of Joan McDonald, Commissioner
New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) before
the Joint Legislative Fiscal Committees
Hamilton Hearing Room B, Legislative Office Building
Thursday, January 26, 2012**

Introduction

Chairman DeFrancisco, Chairman Farrell, Senator Fuschillo, Assemblyman Gantt and members of the Legislative Fiscal and Transportation Committees, thank you for this opportunity to discuss Governor Cuomo's Executive Budget as it pertains to the Department of Transportation (DOT) for the 2012-13 State fiscal year (SFY).

I am Joan McDonald Commissioner of the Department of Transportation (DOT). With me today is Pete Snyder, Assistant Commissioner of Administrative Services and Ron Epstein, Chief Financial Officer.

Governor Cuomo recognizes the significant impact infrastructure investment has on the State's economy and the daily needs of its 19 million residents. Governor Cuomo outlined a comprehensive agenda and a new economic development blueprint for the State. The Governor has also highlighted the need to fundamentally reimagine how government operates; a government that performs better and costs less.

DOT is fully supportive of the Governor's call to rebuild government - to be more responsive, more responsible, and more accountable to the public we serve. To achieve this goal - NYSDOT is employing modern management principles and processes which will underpin successful change in how our Department conducts business, *the peoples business!*

SFY 2012-13 Executive Budget

To enhance the State's economic competitiveness and to create near-term well-paying private-sector engineering, commodity and construction jobs - the Executive Budget includes \$2.9 billion for new on-state and off-state system construction commitments during SFY 2012-13:

- \$1.7 billion for core on-state and off-state system construction; and
- \$1.2 billion for accelerated bridge, pavement and signature projects - consistent with the Governor's economic development blueprint for the State.

The \$1.2 billion Accelerated Program will enable the State to:

- Replace more than 100 bridge decks improving our statewide bridge conditions;
- Preserve more than 2,000 lane miles of roads with low cost preservation treatments; and

- Accelerate the delivery of several important projects across the State .

To ensure that we put people to work immediately at the beginning of this construction season, the Accelerated Paving and Bridge programs will be put out for bid in April, May and June using both traditional and innovative delivery methods.

In addition to the Accelerated Highway and Bridge program, the Executive Budget and accompanying Article VII legislation provide more than \$403 million in CHIPS and Marchiselli funding to finance local highway and bridge projects and more than \$4.5 billion in support of public transportation, passenger and freight rail and airport related programs. Article VII legislative initiatives include a performance based bus inspection program that would reorient the focus of the current program to improve compliance of higher risk carriers.

Moving Forward

As Governor Cuomo has demonstrated, we can no longer wait for help from Washington. We must act now before highway, bridge and transit conditions in our State decline to the point of no longer being able to preserve our infrastructure.

My charge is to ensure that DOT plays an even stronger role in the State's economic recovery. I am committed to fully utilizing our existing programs and capital investments to promote economic development and create new opportunities for small and Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE). Investment in transportation is one of the fastest and most effective ways to create and sustain jobs. Because of our Agency's statewide responsibilities, DOT plays a central role in virtually all major economic development projects around the State.

Conclusion

Governor Cuomo has stated time and time again that the State can no longer spend beyond its means. The Governor has also clearly articulated the need for government to achieve costs savings and efficiencies. Over the next several years our transportation investments will play a central role in the State's economic recovery and future development. NYSDOT will ensure that through continued investments in transportation programs we will foster economic opportunity in New York State. It is what New York must do to reinvigorate economic vitality in this State.

Thank you for your time and we are happy to respond to any questions you may have regarding DOT's budget.