



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rob Rolison

Hinchey, Skoufis, Rolison Urge DOT Action on Hudson Valley Bridge Safety

ROB ROLISON April 2, 2025

Rip Van Winkle Bridge and Newburgh-Beacon Bridge Flagged by National Transportation Safety Board as Potentially Vulnerable to Ship Strikes

Today, Senators Michelle Hinchey, James Skoufis, and Rob Rolison sent a letter to New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) Commissioner, Marie Therese Dominguez, expressing concerns regarding [recent findings](#) by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) on the potential structural vulnerability of the Rip Van Winkle Bridge and Newburgh-Beacon Bridge. These findings come as part of the NTSB's investigation into last year's collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, which crumbled after a cargo ship struck one of its support piers. NTSB's investigation revealed that Maryland officials failed to assess the bridge's vulnerability—an evaluation that would have shown the bridge's risk of collapse was nearly 30 times above the acceptable limit. This oversight has raised alarms about other bridges nationwide, which also lack such assessments, including the Rip Van Winkle and Newburgh-Beacon Bridges.

In their letter, the lawmakers posed specific questions to Commissioner Dominguez regarding the DOT's stance on the NTSB's findings, timelines for addressing possible structural vulnerabilities, safety assessment protocols, prioritization of protection projects, and the availability of state funding for repairs.

Senator Michelle Hinchey said, “Thousands of Hudson Valley residents and visitors rely on the Rip Van Winkle and Newburgh-Beacon Bridges every day—we can’t wait for a disaster to test their safety. The tragic implosion of Baltimore’s Key Bridge was a wake-up call, proving why proactive inspections and reinforcements are essential. We need to know what’s being done to evaluate any possible threats so we can ensure the security of everyone who crosses these vital links to our communities.”

Senator James Skoufis said, “It’s been just over a year since the collapse of the Key Bridge in Baltimore. Six overnight workers were tragically killed, and we must take every action possible to prevent another tragedy from occurring. The two bridges flagged by the National Transportation Safety Board located in the Hudson Valley are vital arteries for the region. Ensuring they remain usable, accessible, and—most of all—safe, is of utmost importance.”

Senator Rob Rolison said, “Our bridges are lifelines for communities and commerce. The NTSB’s findings make clear that we can’t wait for a crisis to act. We urge the DOT to move swiftly in assessing and securing the Newburgh-Beacon and Rip Van Winkle Bridges to protect the thousands who rely on them every day.”