



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

## Statement from Senator Kavanagh and Assemblymember Simon on Budget Amendments Continuing to Exclude Provisions to Speed Up BQE Rehab and Save \$100 Million

BRIAN KAVANAGH February 16, 2018

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**(Brooklyn, NY)** — Today, Senator Brian Kavanagh and Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon released the following statement on Governor Cuomo’s 30-Day Amendments to the Executive Budget proposal, which exclude authorization for the streamlined “design-build” process for the BQE rehabilitation:

“The Brooklyn-Queens Expressway is a critical artery for about 150,000 drivers a day — helping to connect Staten Island, Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan, and Long Island — but it is in need of major rehabilitation work. Unfortunately, the construction will be far more disruptive than it needs to be, and far more expensive, unless Albany changes an outdated law that governs projects like this one. If the state does not act, the City will be forced to redirect trucks onto local Brooklyn streets that run through our communities. That would mean noise, congestion, and safety issues throughout Brooklyn — and delays for everyone who uses I-278, across the region. And it would waste at least \$100 million.

“Authorizing the streamlined design-build process would protect Brooklyn neighborhoods, save taxpayer dollars, and reduce congestion for anyone driving on the BQE. It's a simple fix to a straightforward problem. That’s why 19 State legislators representing Brooklyn and

Staten Island — Republicans and Democrats alike — as well as city elected officials, business leaders, labor unions, truckers, the American Automobile Association, local residents, and civic organizations came together to urge the Governor to amend the Executive Budget proposal to include design-build for the BQE.

“It doesn’t make sense to give state agencies broad authority to use design-build on big projects, including the Mario Cuomo Bridge and Kosciuszko Bridge, while ignoring this critical project in New York City.

“Put simply: if design-build is good enough for state projects, it’s good enough for a city rehabilitation of a major highway in Brooklyn.

“We are disappointed — but this isn’t the end of the road. We will continue working with the Governor's office and our colleagues to ensure design-build for the BQE is authorized in the final budget that will be negotiated and enacted next month.”

***Background:***

The City Department of Transportation is currently in the planning phase of a major rehabilitation of a 1.5 mile segment of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway between Atlantic Avenue and Sands Street, and has warned that if construction is not finished by 2026 roughly 15,000 trucks will have to be redirected onto local streets each day. For a graphic of possible truck routes, click [here](#).

Under the typical “design-bid-build” procurement method, currently required by long-standing State law, construction for the BQE would stretch until 2028. If the State amends the law to authorize the City to use the streamlined “design-build” method, the City says construction would be completed before the 2026 cutoff (for an estimated timeline, click [here](#) ). This would protect Brooklyn neighborhoods from noise, congestion, and unsafe conditions,

reduce delays for anyone using the BQE from Staten Island to Queens, and save taxpayers at least \$100 million.

In January, a bipartisan group of 19 legislators from Staten Island and Brooklyn, led by Senator Kavanagh and Assemblymember Simon, **urged** the Governor to include design-build authorization in the Executive Budget proposal. And, earlier this month, Senator Kavanagh, Assemblymember Simon, City Comptroller Stringer, City Council Speaker Johnson, Brooklyn Borough President Adams and other elected officials joined the DOT and DDC Commissioners, business leaders, and community members to **rally** for BQE design-build.

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