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Robert G. Wessels
General Contractors Association of
New York

New York Roadway and Infrastructure Coalition

111 Washington Avenue, Suite 501
Albany, New York 12210
(518) 436-0786

office@wearenyric.org
www.wearenyric.org

Marc Herbst
President

Long Island Contractors Association - LICA

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**New York State Joint Legislative Hearing on 2025 Executive Budget
Proposal: Transportation**

**Thursday, February 6, 2025, 9:30 AM
Hearing Room B
Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York**

Dear Chairs Krueger, Pretlow, Cooney and Magnarelli:

The New York Roadway Infrastructure Coalition (NYRIC) is a statewide organization that unites industry, labor, business, and community support groups in advocating for increased capital funding to address New York State's vast transportation needs. For decades, NYRIC has promoted long-term, reliable capital improvement programs that ensure the safety and efficiency of roads, bridges, and public transportation systems across the State.

Based off the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) data available since the enactment of the current program, our system is in a state of substantial decline, and it is imperative that immediate steps are taken to rectify the situation. To prevent further deterioration, NYRIC urges you to incorporate the following recommendations into the 2025-26 Assembly and Senate One-House Budget proposal and subsequent negotiations:

- 1. Acknowledge the Ongoing Inflationary Pressures on the Upcoming Year of the NYSDOT Capital Plan:** To counter the unprecedented inflation impacting construction costs, we urge you to support the additional \$800 million for 'core' projects included in the SFY 2025-26 Executive Budget Proposal. This funding will sustain programmed projects outlined in the Capital Plan's Memorandum of Understanding, aim to slow and reverse the decline in condition of NYSDOT road and bridge assets and restore the purchasing power assumed when the plan was developed.

2. **Adopt a formal Twenty-Year Needs Assessment Process for NYSDOT:** Based off the structure that best identifies the continuing capital needs of the MTA system, NYSDOT should adopt a similar approach to capturing and addressing future system needs.
3. **Adopt a Holistic Approach to Funding the Statewide Transportation System:** As new or enhancements to existing revenues are contemplated to close the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's 2025-2029 Capital Plan gap, ensure that such measures are also address the infrastructure needs of NYSDOT.

In addition to these fiscal recommendations, NYRIC urges you to advance Article VII legislation that enhances transportation worker safety (S.9490) and transportation worker assault (S.9782).

The justification for the aforementioned needs have been made clear from current departmental reporting. In 2021, you passed landmark legislation that mandates enhanced transparency from the NYSDOT, requiring annual reports on capital program accomplishments as well as the conditions of highways and bridges. These transparency reports underscore, despite generational transportation funding authorized under the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the State's five-year Capital Plan for NYSDOT, both pavement and bridge conditions are deteriorating at an alarming rate. By the end of the current historic NYSDOT Capital Plan, New York is projected to have the worst pavement and bridge conditions in decades. Key findings from the most recent Annual Highway Pavement and Bridge Conditions Report include:

- **Bridge Conditions**

- All 11 NYSDOT regions reported declines in bridge conditions, which is unprecedented.
- An additional 138 bridges have transitioned from good to fair or poor condition, bringing the total number of structures in fair or poor condition - based on federal criteria - to nearly 11,400 or 65 percent.
- Overall investments in bridge safety assurance declined nearly 20 percent year-over-year.

- **Pavement Conditions**

- Seven of 11 NYSDOT regions experienced declines in pavement conditions.
- An additional 630 lane miles maintained by NYSDOT have shifted from good to fair and poor condition, raising the statewide total in fair or poor condition to nearly 17,000 lane miles (more than 40 percent).
- Overall investments in pavement renewal have decreased by more than 31 percent year-over-year.

- **Overall Capital Investment**

- Total NYSDOT Capital Plan spending declined by nearly \$200 million year-over-year.
- Compounding the decline in pavement and bridge conditions, nearly 40 percent of the \$3.3 billion encumbered by NYSDOT from the Capital Plan last year was allocated to activities that did not improve system conditions.

These findings underscore the urgent need for increased investment in transportation infrastructure.

In conclusion, the decline of New York's transportation infrastructure poses a serious risk to public safety and the state's economic competitiveness. Without adequate funding in the upcoming budget proposal, these challenges will only escalate, leading to more costly repairs and diminished quality of life for New Yorkers. We urge you to prioritize the necessary investments to reverse these trends and ensure a sustainable, safe transportation network for the future.

Sincerely,

Marc Herbst
President
Long Island Contractors Association – LICA



Ross Pepe
President-emeritus



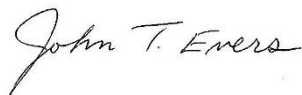
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