

March 8, 2005

The Honorable George E. Pataki  
Governor  
State of New York  
Executive Chamber  
The Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Pataki:

We are writing to express our grave concerns about the impact that the proposed State budget will have on the transportation system that is the lifeblood of the state's economy. We wholeheartedly support the five-year capital plan that the MTA has proposed and recognize that both the core program and expansion projects are critical to the health of the system and the continued growth of the region's economy. We also support the DOT capital plan to support the state's road systems. The entire plan is needed to improve mobility, reduce pollution and congestion, and support the state's economic vitality.

We are thus disheartened that the draft budget only aims to fund \$19.2 billion of the more than \$27 billion in needs identified by the MTA. We are encouraged that some new revenue sources have been identified, and some old ones increased, but in the end we fear that the proposal falls woefully short of what is needed. The \$2 billion that has been cut from vital maintenance and normal replacement will compromise the safety, reliability and service of the system. The \$6 billion shortfall for expansion projects will all but eliminate the possibility that Second Avenue Subway or East Side Access will be completed in our lifetimes.

It is vital that we pass a five-year plan this year to ensure that federal funding is available for the key expansion projects. If a plan is not passed, the State stands to lose up to \$4 billion in anticipated funding for East Side Access and the Second Avenue Subway. In the current fiscal environment, losing these funds would be devastating.

The budget is equally harsh on the state's roadways. The recommendations of the 2025 committee report are largely ignored, the fourth and fifth years of the program remain unfunded and the program will leave NY State DOT with more long-term debt. As you know, pavement conditions in New York State improved from 42.8% in poor and fair condition in 1995 to 30.2% in 2000. But they have recently worsened again. By 2004, 36.6% of the state's roads were again rated poor or fair.

We understand that there are many competing priorities, and that difficult decisions must be made. However, shortchanging the transportation network will only make these matters worse by compromising our ability to maintain and grow the economy. We stand ready to support you and the Legislature in identifying the revenue sources needed to



fund these crucial investments, and hope that the coming weeks will produce needed amendments to the draft budget.

Yours truly,

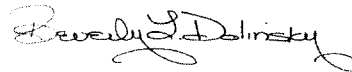


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President  
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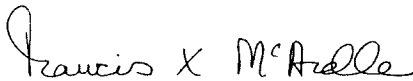


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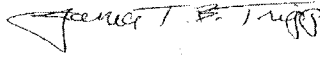
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cc:

The Honorable Sheldon Silver  
The Honorable Joseph Bruno  
The Honorable Peter Kalikow  
The Honorable Catherine Nolan  
The Honorable Richard Brodsky  
The Honorable Dean Skelos  
The Honorable Thomas Libous