



TESTIMONY OF MATTHEW J. DRISCOLL
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2018 JOINT HEARING OF THE LEGISLATIVE FISCAL COMMITTEES - TRANSPORTATION
THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2018

Chairperson Young, Chairperson Weinstein, and members of the Senate and Assembly Fiscal and Transportation Committees; thank you for having me here today. My name is Matthew Driscoll and I am the Acting Executive Director for the New York State Thruway Authority.

The Governor Thomas E. Dewey Thruway is a 570-mile superhighway crossing New York State, and is one of the longest toll systems in the United States. Underscoring its importance to the state, region and nation, our preliminary figures for 2017 indicate that Thruway customers traveled approximately 8.3 billion vehicle-miles on the highway, averaging roughly 23 million vehicle-miles per day. In addition to being the principal artery of travel and commerce within New York and connecting many of our State's major cities, the Thruway is a vital link to long distance interstate travel. In addition,

the Thruway provides the major route of access for visitors to the State's tourism anchors, including Niagara Falls, the Finger Lakes, the Adirondacks, the Catskills and New York City.

The overall 2018 Thruway Authority budget represents a total financial commitment of \$1.5 billion. In 2018, it is anticipated that the Thruway Authority will replace or rehabilitate 25 bridges and address approximately 170 lane miles. It is a budget that is balanced; provides the necessary resources to keep our patrons safe while maintaining our facilities; and maximizes funding for critical infrastructure projects in the Authority's multi-year Capital Plan.

I'd like to update you on the New NY Bridge project, one of the nation's largest and safest active bridge projects, and a national model of design-build construction. This project continues to be on track to fully open later this year and remains on budget at \$3.98 billion. In August 2017, westbound traffic shifted to the first span of the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge, followed by eastbound traffic shifting in October so that all traffic is now on the first span.

The 2019 Executive Budget includes a re-appropriation of nearly \$2 billion from the Special Infrastructure Account for the Thruway Stabilization Program. These funds will continue to support capital investments including the Bridge and other projects throughout the system. We appreciate your continued support of the Bridge project and the recognition of our system-wide capital needs. This support enables tolls to remain at current levels until at least 2020.

The Executive Budget also includes an authorization for the Thruway Authority to enter into agreements for use of its fiber optic system based on set fees established by an appraisal. This new business model will help enable the Thruway Authority to optimize use of our fiber optic system by engaging with multiple parties. This asset consists of multiple ducts and fibers enabling many entities to use it simultaneously, maximizing revenue potential to further support our facilities.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the talented men and women of the Thruway Authority for their dedication and professionalism in bringing the highest standards of safety and reliability across our operation every day.

In closing, please know that I am personally committed to ensuring that the Authority continues to play a central role in the State's economic expansion; empowers ingenuity and innovation; and demonstrates the impact that an effective and responsive government can have on the lives of its residents. Thank you for your time. I'm happy to respond to any questions you may have.