



January 26, 2021

Re: Joint Legislative Hearing: 2021-22 Executive Budget Transportation Proposal

LiUNA NY represents over 40,000 union members, 24 local unions and 1,500 affiliated contractors throughout New York State. NYS LECET aggressively advocates for bold infrastructure investment, responsible development, as well as wage and safety standards for our members, raising the floor for both union and nonunion construction workers.

Transportation, Economic Development and Environmental Conservation (TED)

LiUNA NY applauds the Governor's commitment to the advancement of work zone safety measures that will save the lives of countless motorists and workers. While these proposals are to be lauded, we look forward to working with the Executive Chamber and the legislature to further the protections outlined within the budget. LiUNA NY is in staunch support of increasing penalties for the invasion of a work zone and menacing a highway worker. These acts are serious offenses and the punishment must reflect the severity of the crime. These penalties will help deter the behavior moving forward. In addition to these important measures, the Executive Budget must prioritize and include the photo enforcement of roadway work zones. In the year 2018, 701 accidents occurred in New York State roadway work zones, resulting in 329 injuries and 13 fatalities, a sharp increase from previous years¹. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the scope of the problem, with ticketing from the New York State Police increasing by nearly 70 percent in the year 2020². Photo enforcement is a proven method in dissuading motorists from engaging in reckless behavior, saving countless lives. It is essential that photo enforcement be included in the final budget in order to better protect both motorists and workers.

Appropriations: Capital Projects

In addition to the critical safety measures proposed, LiUNA NY remains a steadfast advocate for fully funding local roads and bridges through the Consolidated Local Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS). The \$477.8 million allocation is critical to continued road and bridge maintenance and construction, as well as to the creation of countless jobs. In a time of significant economy uncertainty, it is essential this program receives continued investment.

Work zone safety and investment in transportation infrastructure is critical to the state's future. LiUNA NY thanks you for your time and consideration into these important matters.

¹ Work Zone Safety Awareness. New York Department of Transportation. 2018

² "Work Zone Crashes Climb During Pandemic, Even as Traffic Ebbs." Pew Trusts Report.2020

