

**New York State Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Transportation
February 6, 2025**

**TESTIMONY OF WALTER PACHOLCZAK
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ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS OF NEW YORK STATE**

Senator Krueger, Assemblymember Pretlow and members of the Legislature, on behalf of the Associated General Contractors of New York State (AGC NYS), I thank you for holding this important public hearing to discuss the proposed fiscal year 2026 (FY 2026) Executive Budget and transportation.

AGC NYS is New York's leading statewide construction industry association of union and open shop contractors, that build New York's transportation, heavy highway, civil, environmental, public, and private building infrastructure. We represent nearly 600 contractor, subcontractor, and related firms and as an association have more than 80 years of experience working with public agencies and private developers to deliver quality projects that are the lifeblood of our communities. More than just builders, our members are proud stewards of New York's public and privately built infrastructure.

Today's testimony will focus on the impacts of the Executive Budget proposal on the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), and related Article VII legislative proposals.

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Capital Programs

New York State Department of Transportation

The FY 2026 Executive Budget includes approximately \$6.9 billion for the fourth year of the five-year Department of Transportation (DOT) Capital Plan. It also increases the overall DOT Capital Plan by \$1 billion, bringing the total size of the plan to \$34.1 billion, to support State and local road and bridge construction and transit system improvements. The DOT Capital Plan continues funding commitments to support the final phases of major infrastructure projects, including the Hunts Point Interstate Access Improvement and the replacement of I-81 in Syracuse. The plan also supports new large-scale projects, including: modernizing the Livingston Avenue Bridge in Albany; converting Route 17 to I-86 in Orange and Sullivan Counties; and assessing ways to improve road capacity at the Oakdale Merge in Suffolk County. The Capital Plan also includes \$1 billion for the “Bridge NY” program and \$1 billion for the Pave Our Potholes (POP) program and continues funding commitments to local highway and bridge programs.

AGC NYS Comments - NYSDOT Capital: AGC NYS applauds Governor Hochul for increasing the overall NYSDOT Capital Plan by \$1 billion including \$800 million for the CORE road and bridge projects across New York State. The Governor’s commitment to transformative infrastructure is supported by New York’s business, labor, and industry because a long-term, adequately funded NYSDOT capital program that ensures the safety and efficiency of roads, bridges, and public transportation systems across the State. 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. Furthermore, AGC NYS commends the leadership of NYSDOT Commissioner Marie Therese Dominguez and her staff to partner with construction industry as we rebuild New York’s road and bridge infrastructure.

MTA 2020-2024 Capital Plan. The MTA remains committed to its \$52.1 billion 2020-2024 Capital Program, which continues to revitalize the subway system through signal modernization and accessibility upgrades, while also providing important investments in railroads and bus service to advance the quality of life for those served. A substantial amount of new funding was authorized to fund the 2020-2024 Capital Plan, including \$15 billion from congestion pricing revenues. MTA 2025-2029 Capital Plan is being developed and funding sources to be determined.

AGC NYS Comments – MTA Capital: AGC NYS supports a fully funded 2025-2029 MTA Capital Program.

Article VII - Transportation, Economic Development and Environmental Conservation

Part Q – Make Permanent and Expand the Workzone Speed Camera Program Purpose: This bill would make permanent the NYS Thruway Authority and NYS Department of Transportation (DOT) programs for speed violation photo monitoring systems in work zones (Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement – AWZSE), increase penalties, modify the adjudication process, expand the authorization for speed violation photo monitoring to the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority and NYS Bridge Authority, and establish a Work Zone Speed Camera Administration Fund.

AGC NYS Comments – Workzone Speed Camera Program: The success of the work zone speed camera program to increase the safety of highway workers is worthy of making it permanent.

Part R – Enhanced Transportation Worker Protections: This bill would expand the categories of transportation workers that qualify for enhanced assault protections under the Penal Law.
Summary of Provisions: This bill would allow motor vehicle license examiners, motor vehicle representatives, highway workers, motor carrier investigators, and motor vehicle inspectors to have the same protections against assault that are already provided to many other employees in the transportation sector.

AGC NYS Comments – Enhanced Transportation Worker Protections: AGC NYS supports closing this loophole in the law to protect transportation workers.

Conclusion:

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.