



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

Senator Montgomery joins colleagues to urge Governor Cuomo to support design-build authorization for the Brooklyn Queens Expressway (BQE) reconstruction project in the Fiscal Year 2019 Executive Budget

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| ISSUE: **DESIGN-BUILD, BQE RECONSTRUCTION, TRANSPORTATION**



Senator Montgomery joins Senator Brian Kavanagh, Senator Martin Malave Dilan, Senator Martin Golden, Senator Jesse Hamilton, Senator Andrew Lanza, Senator Kevin Parker, Senator Roxanne Persaud, Senator Diane Savino, Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon, Assemblymember Robert Carroll, Assemblymember Michael Cusick, Assemblymember Maritza Davila, Assemblymember Pamela Harris, Assemblymember Joseph Lentol, Assemblymember Nicole Malliotakis, Assemblymember Walter Mosley, Assemblymember Felix Ortiz

and Assemblymember Matthew Titone in urging Governor Cuomo to support design-build authorization for the Brooklyn Queens Expressway (BQE) reconstruction project in the Fiscal Year 2019 Executive Budget.

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We write as representatives of Brooklyn and Staten Island residents who will be directly affected by the massive reconstruction of the Brooklyn Queens Expressway (BQE) from Atlantic Avenue to Sands Street, including the triple cantilevered portion in Brooklyn Heights. We strongly urge you to include design-build authorization for the project in the Fiscal Year 2019 Executive Budget. By authorizing a design-build procurement process, the State would enable the City of New York to expedite the BQE rehabilitation process by as many as two years and save taxpayers over \$113 million, based upon a conservative estimate of the project's current cost of \$1.9 billion. This portion of Interstate 278 (I-278) is a critical link in the region's transportation system and a prolonged reconstruction could damage the region's economy.

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By way of background, the BQE serves as a major access point to and from the East River bridges between Brooklyn and Manhattan and is a crucial route for freight trucks. The triple cantilever portion of the 1.5 mile stretch between Atlantic Avenue and Sands Street, constructed in the mid-1940s, is remarkable for its mode of construction of two roadways and a wide promenade cantilevered off the bluff of Brooklyn's "heights" – highly unusual for its time and engineered in a way that makes its reconstruction a complex and daunting undertaking. The roadways have been deteriorating rapidly, and have not undergone a major update since their construction. This project includes a series of 26 bridge structures, many exit and entrance ramps and retaining walls. Currently, it carries over 150,000 cars and trucks per day with increasing volume. Because of the high levels of congestion, including large freight trucks, the roadway is under increasingly serious pressure, particularly to the outermost lane of each level of the cantilevered portion. Analysis conducted by the New York City Department of Transportation has concluded that a complete rehabilitation of this segment of the BQE must begin now to ensure long-term safety and avoid severe service disruptions over the next decade.

To read the entire letter, download the PDF.