



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## Staten Island Representatives Call on Port Authority to Withdraw Toll Hike Proposal

ANDREW J. LANZA September 6, 2019

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*businesses. It will also cripple Staten Island's port business. We call upon Governor Cuomo to step in and defend us from the Port Authority."*

STATEN ISLAND - Representatives from across Staten Island called on the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to withdraw a proposed toll increase that would drastically increase the cost of living and doing business on the Island. Signed by Assemblymember Michael Cusick, Congressman Max Rose, State Senators Diane Savino and Andrew Lanza, and Borough President James Oddo, the letter notes that the proposed plan would see Islanders who cross into New Jersey nine times per month would see an astonishing 120 percent toll increase over what they pay today.

"The proposed toll hike is unacceptable," Cusick said. "My constituents are already facing some of the highest tolls in the nation, and this proposal to eliminate the current three-trip discount from the Port Authority is rubbing salt in the wound."

"This proposal to hike our tolls and eviscerate the resident discount on the Port Authority bridges is unacceptable and downright insulting," Rose said. "Time and time again, unelected bureaucrats seem to think Staten Islanders are their piggy banks to fund budget gaps and infrastructure projects all over the city while our own roads are crumbling. We won't stand for it."

"Staten Islanders not only face the longest commute times, but the highest commuting costs," Savino said. "Raising the tolls and making the trip discount near insurmountable shows these proposals are only about the financial bottom line-- not the residents or businesses."

"When Assemblyman Cusick and I negotiated and secured this Staten Island discount with Governor Cuomo and the Port Authority, the commitment was for it to remain permanent," Lanza said. "Now the Port Authority is attempting to betray us in order to pay for projects in other places and for their own bloated and mismanaged bureaucracy. This proposed and outrageous toll hike is no more than a new tax on hard working Staten Islanders and businesses. It will also cripple Staten Island's port business. We call upon Governor Cuomo to step in and defend us from the Port Authority."

"Compared to what is available in the other boroughs, public transportation options for Staten Islanders are pathetic," Oddo said. "Given that disturbing fact, those driving to work, or to visit family, or for a multitude of other reasons, should not be overburdened by toll plan changes which will place on them an increased financial hardship they do not deserve and should not be asked to pay."

[A full copy of the letter is here.](#)