

TESTIMONY

**John Cooney, Jr. -- Executive Director  
Construction Industry Council of Westchester & Hudson Valley, Inc.**

**Joint Legislative Public Hearing on 2024-2025 Executive Budget Proposal**

*Topic: Transportation*

**The New York State Department of Transportation Capital Program**

**Wednesday, January 24, 2024 -- 9:30 am**

**Legislative Office Building**

**Albany, NY**

Good morning, Chair Kennedy, Chair Magnarelli and committee members.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this important public hearing. My name is John Cooney, Jr., and I serve as the Executive Director of the Construction Industry Council of Westchester & Hudson Valley, Inc. The CIC acts as the collective bargaining agent for some six hundred employers in the heavy – highway contracting community as well as hundreds of suppliers and builders throughout the region aligned with DOT Region 8.

As advocates for the heavy highway and transportation infrastructure sector of construction, CIC partners with some thirty union locals of organized labor, and collectively speaks for more than 30,000 local residents who are employees of these enterprises and members of families throughout the seven counties of the lower Hudson Valley.

As I speak to you today, we are coming close to the completion of the second full year of the current five-year NYSDOT Capital plan. The \$32.8 Billion 5-Year Capital Plan represented a \$2.8 Billion Increase over the previous 5 years of capital investment. The present capital plan at its onset provided for approximately \$4.1 Billion of new funding for priority projects such as the Van Wyck, I 81, and Kensington. This new funding was in a major sense developed by the \$2.8 Billion increase in funding combined with a \$1.0 Billion cut the NYS DOT Core Program.

Despite the \$2.0 Billion increase in spending over the present 5-year plan to date the condition of roads and bridges has worsened.

Bridges

In reviewing of over 10 years of data New York State presently has a record high 4,264 deficient bridges.

Pavements

In 2017 25% of New York State Roads were in fair and poor condition. In 2022 42% of New York State Roads were in fair and poor condition.

In The Hudson Valley represented by NYS DOT Region 8 my home region has and has had the worst road and bridge conditions in New York State.

This information is all derived from NYS DOT data.

Why despite \$2.0 Billion in increased funding are conditions worse?

Since the onset of the capital plan in 2021 through the end of 2023 the Federal Highway Administration National Highway Construction Cost Index shows a 21% cost increase. Further, at the onset of the current Five-Year Capital Plan the State & Local Construction also referred to as the Core Program was reduced by \$1.0 Billion over the 5 years of the plan. The Core Program is the major funding line for the construction programs carried out by the 11 regions of NYSDOT.

Without increased funding the decline in road and bridge conditions across the state will accelerate rapidly!

**We at the Construction Industry Council believe that at least \$400 Million should be added to the 2024-25 budget for core highway construction to help NYS DOT catch up with the lost purchasing power erode by inflation. Further we would ask that \$150 million be added to the CHIPS funding line to help our local communities maintain their level of effort eroded by inflation as well.**

**You could think or ask how can this be done under the constrained fiscal situation this year's budget is under ? The answer is simple New York States roads and bridges are continuing to decline and the cost of catching up later will exceed the increased ask of today. This increase is smart money that will save money later!!!**

**Thank you for your time and attention.**