

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 18, 2011

Governor Chris Christie
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Dear Governor Christie,

As Chairmen of two Senate subcommittees working on the reauthorization of the surface transportation bill, we request your assistance in assessing how the House and Senate proposals could impact the state. Such an assessment would be useful in our efforts to reauthorize a bill that will encourage growth, get the economy back on track, and serve New Jersey's transportation needs.

The House Republican proposal would cut federal funding to the state by \$3 billion over the next 6 years and has been projected to cost the state 18,000 jobs in the first year. How will this impact your 5-year transportation plan for the state? Can the state make up for this loss of funding without cutting transportation services? A detailed impact assessment would be valuable to us and the entire Congressional delegation.

The Senate proposal is a 2-year bill at current levels of spending. In order to achieve such a bill, at least \$12 billion in offsets will need to be found. Assuming acceptable funding offsets are identified, how might this approach affect the state's planning for transportation spending over the next two years and for the duration of your transportation plan? Again, an assessment of these impacts would be appreciated.

Although we have taken different positions on a variety of issues, we all share a commitment to growing New Jersey businesses and enhancing the transportation system for all users. In this regard, we likely agree that no other state and few countries can compete with New Jersey's transportation network, and this network is a keystone for statewide prosperity. It is New Jersey's competitive advantage that we have the largest port on the East Coast, the best statewide public transportation system in the country, an excellent international airport, among the most robust passenger and freight rail systems in the nation, and several world-class interstate highways.

In the interest of maintaining or even strengthening our competitive edge and enhancing our high quality of life, it is imperative that we make well-considered decisions today that will impact the state for years to come. In order to do this, we must develop and utilize the best information possible.

It is our sincere hope that we can work together to safeguard the public interest and maximize the value of each taxpayer dollar in the next Surface Transportation bill by ensuring a thorough evaluation of the impacts that House and Senate proposals could have on New Jersey.

We look forward to your prompt response to help in the development of this important reauthorization.

Sincerely,



Robert Menendez



Frank R. Lautenberg