



**INTERNATIONAL
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June 30, 2020

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Schumer:

I am writing on behalf of the 775,000 active and retired members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to express serious concerns regarding the viability of certain transportation infrastructure projects being adversely affected by the devastating economic impact of COVID-19. Specifically, infrastructure projects performed by financially independent multi-state entities are at risk of being indefinitely stalled or permanently cancelled. We respectfully urge you and Congress to create a \$4 billion dollar appropriation in the next stimulus package to be expressly and specifically allocated to these multi-state agencies.

As you know, our nation's transportation infrastructure is critical to the strength of our regional, national, and global economies. There are six (6) financially independent, multi-state entities throughout the country whose capital plans play a large role in growing and improving this critical transportation infrastructure. For example, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey stands ready to begin a total rebuild of JFK airport. The modernization of this global hub is projected to create nearly 30,000 good paying jobs. Additionally, the project would require procurement of massive amounts of materials from businesses in the region. This project would be a huge stimulus for the region, the need for which cannot be overstated in the current climate.

However, the economic impact of COVID-19 has placed this project, and the overall capital construction programs of the Port Authority and similar financially independent multi-state agencies, in jeopardy. Revenue for these agencies are generated through tolls on bridges and tunnels, fares on certain transportation systems, and airport traffic. Passenger volume and the revenue it generates has plummeted. Furthermore, these agencies receive no taxpayer support.

It is crucial that a \$4 billion appropriation be created specifically for these multi-state agencies. It is impractical to believe that any funding appropriated for State governments will be redirected by the States to these agencies while many States and municipalities are facing tremendous budget deficits for the foreseeable future. Federal funding is best spent by putting people to work. These multi-state agencies have projects that have been planned, designed, and are ready to proceed if they are funded. Congress needs to act to get these agencies and infrastructure projects funded and to put people to work.

Sincerely yours,

Lonnie R. Stephenson
International President

LRS:nl

