State of New Jersey
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

April 24, 2012

The Honorable Janet Napolitano
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Ray La Hood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Napolitano and Secretary LaHood:

I write to fully endorse the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's efforts to expedite the Bayonne Bridge "Raise the Roadway" program under President Obama's Executive Order seeking to expedite federal infrastructure programs. Because the Panama Canal expansion is expected to be completed in 2014, the Bayonne Bridge's existing navigational clearance of 151 feet must be increased to accommodate the use of larger, Post-Panamax vessels. These larger, newer, and more efficient, Post-Panamax ships are expected to benefit the regional and national economy, reduce environmental impacts, provide economies of scale, and lower shipping costs to our regional, national and international customers.

The Port of New York and New Jersey has the notable distinction of being the busiest port on the eastern seaboard, processing 40 percent of east coast container imports and serving the robust consumer markets of the Northeast, industrial Midwest, and eastern Canada. Annually, the Port of New York and New Jersey supports more than 280,000 jobs, $11.2 billion in personal income, and more than $36 billion in business income in the region. The existing 151-foot clearance restriction of the Bayonne Bridge jeopardizes the Port's competitiveness and economic growth, and limits expansion of not only the New York/New Jersey region, but also national and international consumer markets.

Beyond the connection of 1.1 million residents of Hudson County and Staten Island, the Bridge serves as a critical transportation and safety link for the 63,000 residents of Bayonne – people that I work every day to serve and protect.

Bayonne Bridge construction is expected to produce approximately 1,000 jobs, and more than $380 million in wages and $1.6 billion in economic activity. New Jersey's hard-working building tradesmen and women – including our Laborers, Ironworkers, Operating Engineers and others – will safely and efficiently complete a world-class project that we will be proud of. In the longer term, the Bayonne Bridge will assure that the Port of New York and New Jersey maintains its position as an important economic engine for the region, providing sustainable regional and national economic growth.

With the Federal regulatory process well underway, the Bayonne Bridge is in an ideal position to expedite construction. Every month that the required regulatory review can be accelerated is one month sooner that the project can start construction, generate jobs, and get our economy moving forward.

Thank you for your consideration and efforts to expedite economic growth and development through the support of the President's Executive Order.

Sincerely,

Chris Christie
Governor