NEW JERSEY STATE AFL-CIO
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September 24, 2008

Honorable Kris Kolluri
Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Transportation
Executive Director, New Jersey Turnpike Authority
581 Main Street
Woodbridge, NJ 07095

Dear Commissioner Kolluri and Representatives of the Authority:

RE: Public Hearing Testimony in Support of Toll Adjustment Proposal for the New Jersey Turnpike and Garden State Parkway

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO supports the toll adjustment proposal for the New Jersey Turnpike and the Garden State Parkway. At its most basic level, the proposal insures that funding will be collected to ensure to the motoring public that these roadways are safe, that they are expanded to handle increasing capacity and relieve congestion, to ensure that matching funds are available to guarantee federal financial support for the ARC tunnel, and to meet our obligation to bond holders.

We understand that our members, and the general public that use these roadways, will have to pay more money via tolls to make these infrastructure improvements a reality. However, we believe that we no longer can simply ignore the continuing and worsening transportation problems. This is a sobering proposal that will only deal with immediate needs on these two major roadways. More needs to be done of course, in particular to fund the TTF, but the current toll adjustment proposal is a much needed first step toward solving several major infrastructure problems.

For over a decade, the Legislature has not been able to enact a compressive plan for funding infrastructure. Several attempts have been made by both Democrats and Republicans, but nothing has been enacted, short of Governor Corzine's debt restructuring program in 2006. Since then, the political will to address our continuing infrastructure problem has not materialized.

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO believes that this is a modest proposal that must be acted upon immediately for the benefit of motorists, our state and regional economy. The proposal will also create thousands of jobs and give a much needed economic stimulus to working families in the Garden State.

Sincerely,

Charles Wowkanech
President

Laurel Brennan
Secretary/Treasurer

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OPEIU:153