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Put Transit on the Tappan Zee

Groups kick off a new grassroots outreach and public awareness campaign to get transit back on the Tappan Zee

Put transit back on the Tappan Zee, that is the message being delivered by BRTontheBridge.org, a new website and gateway to a grassroots organizing and public awareness campaign composed of a broad and diverse statewide coalition of residents, elected officials, transportation experts, labor, environmental and social justice groups.

The campaign will remind the state that the people have spoken, they support a modern bridge that meets the needs of their communities both now and in the future, and that this bridge includes Bus Rapid Transit, from the start.

Through over ten years of study and 280 public meetings, the state arrived at the decision that transit, specifically bus rapid transit across the Hudson River and along the I-287 corridor in Westchester and Rockland, is a vital part of the project.

The State's own reports predict that "without major transit investments, already unacceptable levels of congestion [will] occur in the corridor far into the future." A transitless Tappan Zee Bridge would be obsolete from day one.

A bridge with transit will create more jobs both today and in the future. Studies show that investments in public transportation generate 31% more jobs per dollar than new construction of roads and bridges alone. BRT also provides a backbone for regional economic development while curbing sprawl.

In recent days New York State Department of Transportation Commissioner Joan McDonald has stated that doing the new Tappan Zee Bridge as a public-private partnership would add at least a year to the project and that adding transit would add two years.

“Instead of saying why transit can’t happen,” said Tri-State Transportation Campaign Executive Director Kate Slevin, “the state should move the project forward expeditiously, but in a way that best uses taxpayer dollars and provides the public transportation communities need.”

Furthermore, opposition to a transit-less bridge could delay the project much longer.

The state is scheduled to release the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) on the Tappan Zee River Crossing Project on Thursday. Citizens and organizations can learn more about the project, the DEIS and speak up for transit at the new website BRTontheBridge.org.

The Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a non-profit advocacy and policy organization working for a more sustainable transportation network in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Visit www.tstc.org.