

NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

County Government with a Unified Voice!

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NJ DOT FREEZES CRITICAL BRIDGE FUNDING

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(Trenton) The New Jersey Association of Counties (NJAC) is once again urging State leaders to establish a stable, dependable, and long-term source of dedicated funding for the State's nearly insolvent Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) in the wake of NJ DOT's decision to freeze \$25.0 million in vital bridge repair, replacement, and rehabilitation funding under the State's successful Local Bridges, Future Needs Program (LBFN).

"From the waterfront development in Hudson County, to the Jackson Mills Culvert in Ocean County, to the Bridge over Prescott Brook in Hunterdon County, NJ DOT's decision to freeze this critical funding may jeopardize local economies and place the safety of residents at risk," said Mercer County Freeholder and NJAC President Ann Cannon.

LBFN is funded by TTF monies and provides annual grants of \$1.0 million to each county as financial assistance to repair or replace structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridges. NJ DOT also makes available an additional \$4.0 million as discretionary funding for a total of \$25.0 million per year. County governments operate and maintain approximately 7,140 bridges with 11.0% of the 2,566 major bridges classified as "Structurally Deficient" and 17.0% of these same bridges classified as "Functionally Obsolete" in need of repair or replacement. Moreover, 64.1% of the 4,584 minor bridges are in need of repair and 21.9% of these same bridges must be replaced.

"With these staggering numbers in mind, it's imperative that our State leaders act now to establish a stable, dependable, and long-term source of dedicated funding for the TTF; and, increase Local Aid allocations to mitigate the reliance on the collection of local property taxes, promote economic and job growth, and ensure a safe and reliable transportation network," commented Cannon.

NJAC is committed to advocating for legislation, regulations, and policy directives that empower county governments to operate more efficiently and effectively. As a non-partisan organization that represents the only true regional form of government in the State with a proactive and unified voice, NJAC is dedicated to enhancing the level of service provided and save valuable taxpayer dollars. Please visit our website at www.njac.org for more details about our growing organization.