

NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

County Government with a Unified Voice!

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NJAC STATEMENT ON WORSENING TRANSPORTATION CRISIS

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(Trenton) The New Jersey Association of Counties (NJAC) is concerned that the six week long shutdown of all projects funded by the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) will carry long-term consequences for local property taxpayers across the State.

“The unprecedented stoppage of all work funded by the TTF has forced county and municipal officials to terminate ongoing projects and postpone new shovel ready ones that will cost valuable taxpayer dollars in delay claims, remobilization costs, and litigation expenses,” *commented Union County Freeholder Chairman Bruce Bergen.*

Hudson, Union, and Passaic were the first of several counties expected to file a “Notice of Claim” against the New Jersey Department of Transportation (DOT) for breach of contract resulting from Executive Order No. 210, which Governor Chris Christie signed on July 6th forcing the shutdown of all projects funded by the TTF. In general, New Jersey law requires filing a “Notice of Claim” as a prerequisite to seeking damages through litigation from a public entity. Several counties plan on petitioning DOT to continue with TTF funded projects to ensure the safety and well-being of residents pursuant to Executive Order No. 213 executed by the Governor on August 17th, while other counties have decided to complete critical projects using county funds.

“As county and municipal governments continue to struggle with delivering essential services in a cost effective manner, failure to reauthorize the TTF as a top priority of Governor Christie, and to restore local aid allocations as called for by Senate President Steve Sweeney and Speaker Vincent Prieto, will force residents to endure further property tax increases and vital program cuts,” *commented NJAC Executive Director John Donnadio.*

County and municipal roads and bridges carry over 55% of the State’s overall traffic and depend on the \$190.0 million each year in local aid allocations. As has been well documented, county governments have an annual need \$565.0 million to operate and maintain an estimated 7,140 bridges and more than 6,775 centerline miles of roads. Additionally, counties must invest nearly \$2.85 billion to repair, rehabilitate or replace “structurally deficient” and “functionally obsolete” bridges and culverts. Please do not hesitate to contact us at (609) 394-3467 with any questions or concerns.