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Statement of Tri-State Transportation Campaign Executive Director Veronica Vanterpool, in response to today's announcement of a mass transit agreement for the Tappan Zee Bridge replacement project.

Today's announcement of a mass transit agreement for the Tappan Zee Bridge project between Governor Cuomo and the county executives of Westchester, Rockland, and Putnam could be a sign that this bridge project is taking a turn for the better. The deciding factor will be whether this Regional Transit Task Force brings transit further into reality in the new bridge project than the last regional task force. Financial support, diverse engagement, and urgency in the planning process are the absolute minimum criteria to make this happen.

A firm commitment from Governor Cuomo's office for dedicated bus lanes on the span from day one is a real victory that will improve commutes for bus riders and drivers from the day the bridge opens. But, without additional measures for bus rapid transit in the future, the bus lanes themselves will do little to address the mobility needs of the I-287 corridor. This initial investment shows that the governor's office has moved beyond the rhetoric of "transit-readiness" to a concrete transit provision.

We applaud Governor Cuomo and County Executives Astorino, Vanderhoef, and Odell for their work in putting transit back into the new bridge project. We expect their full support for a timely, focused transit outcome, so that the Hudson Valley region finally gets the bridge project it deserves.

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Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a non-profit organization working toward a more balanced, transit-friendly and equitable transportation system in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey.