



## **Statement: Governor Cuomo's Proposed Verrazano-Narrows Bridge Toll Reduction Doesn't Address Inequity**

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*TSTC Executive Director Veronica Vanterpool's statement on Governor Cuomo's announcement of toll reductions on the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge:*

Governor Cuomo's announcement of reduced tolls on the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge addresses the wrong inequity for Staten Island residents: the lack of robust transit service for the borough's 471,000 residents. Faced with limited transit options, many Staten Islanders have to drive, which contributes to traffic congestion, deteriorated roadways, and unsafe street conditions that led to [21 pedestrian fatalities](#) between 2010 and 2012.

Staten Island residents need bus service that is faster, more modern, and convenient throughout more neighborhoods and communities. Without these improvements, residents are left with few options but to drive in traffic and pay a high toll. Instead, this toll reduction will encourage more driving, traffic, and congestion. The action is not a remedy that addresses long-term transportation needs.

But with the Governor proposing to divert up to \$350 million in dedicated transit funds—which help pay for transit improvements—over the next several years, beginning with \$40 million this fiscal year, Staten Islanders should not expect to see more robust investment in Staten Island's transit infrastructure anytime soon. Unfortunately, this election-year toll reduction will only be temporary relief for the transportation injustice residents, businesses and visitors encounter when traveling in the borough.

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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 New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. [tstc.org](http://tstc.org)*