

**PRESS RELEASE February 11, 2010**

**Association of NJ Environmental Councils  
Amalgamated Transportation Union, NJ State Council  
Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia  
Environment NJ  
NJ Clean Cities Coalition  
NJ Future  
NJ Highlands Coalition  
NJPIRG  
NJ Sierra Club  
Regional Plan Association  
Tri-State Transportation Campaign**

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## **Groups to Governor Christie: No Cuts to Transit!**

A broad coalition of labor, environmental, and planning groups called on Governor Christie to reconsider his proposal to drastically cut NJTransit funding, saying that transit fare increases and service cuts will hurt the state's economy and environment. According to the American Public Transportation Association, every billion invested in transit operations creates 41,000 jobs, and every billion dollars invested in transit construction projects creates 23,000 jobs.

The groups warned that if the cuts to the agency are implemented, commuters will face drastically higher fares, longer waits at stations, more congestion on roadways, and more pollution in the air. The cuts were announced in a budget speech in Trenton today.

“Governor Christie is sending the wrong message for the state's transportation priorities by penalizing transit riders while refusing to consider an increase in the gas tax or other driver fees,” said Kate Slevin, executive director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, a regional policy watchdog organization. “Transit fare increases are tax increases.”

“Raising fees for transit use, instead of raising fees for road use, will dampen the years of progress that the state has made increasing transit ridership, focusing growth and redevelopment near transit stations and working to get more cars off the road,” said Peter Kasabach, executive director of NJ Future.

"This is a nasty snowball from Governor Christie to transit riders," said Doug O'Malley, field director for Environment New Jersey. "NJ Transit is already cutting back service, and additional cuts will mean more stranded riders and fare hikes -- and less people riding our trains and buses."

"If Governor Christie wants to cut waste in New Jersey, cutting public transit and forcing people onto our already congested roadways is the wrong way to go. According to a 2007 Texas Transportation Institute report, in the metro New York area alone, our transit system saves us over 216 million hours in delays each year," said Rebecca Alper, NJPIRG Program Associate.

"This will lead to higher fares and cuts in services at a time when people are using public transportation more than ever before. We'll still be subsidizing highways in the middle of nowhere as funding for mass transit goes down, leading to more traffic and air pollution," said Jeff Tittel, Director, NJ Sierra Club.

"NJTransit is already operating at bare bones," said Carlos Rodriguez, Vice President and New Jersey Director of the Regional Plan Association. "The agency was cut \$62 million in the last budget."

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