TAPPAN ZEE HUDSON RIVER

CROSSING STUDY

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT PUBLIC HEARING

Palisades Center, Raso Room
1000 Palisades Center Drive
West Nyack, New York

Tuesday, February 28, 2012
5:00 P.M.

MICHAEL P. ANDERSON, P.E.,
Project Director,
New York State Department of Transportation

DAVID CAPOBIANCO,
Director of the Office of Transportation Planning and Environmental Services at New York State Thruway Authority

RICHARD TOMER,
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

ARNOLD BLOCH, Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates
Session Moderator

Rockland & Orange Reporting
20 South Main Street
New City, New York 10956
(845) 634-4200
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MR. BLOCH: Good afternoon, everyone.
Before I even introduce myself, I want to apologize for the fact that we don't have chairs for everyone. This has to do with the fact that there is a maximum seating limit in this room, and we've hit it. And so we apologize for the fact that there are not chairs for everyone. There are a few chairs up front and if you'd like to come and try to find one, please feel free to do so. I just want to let you know that.

My name is Arnold Bloch. I'm a principal of the firm of Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, and I welcome you to this public hearing on behalf of the following people:

Joan McDonald, the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation for the State of New York;

Thomas J. Madison, Jr., the Executive Director of the New York State Thruway Authority;

Jonathan McDade, the Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration's New York Region; and
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Colonel John R. Boule II, District Commander of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, New York District.

I will be serving as the moderator and hearing officer for this evening's public hearing. Now, this is the first of two formal public hearings for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and you'll be hearing the acronym DEIS, that has been prepared for the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project in Rockland and Westchester Counties. It fulfills the requirements of Article 2 of the New York State Eminent Domain Procedure Law for Right-of-Way acquisitions required for construction.

This hearing is also intended to gather information on an application by the project for a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to transport and place dredge material from construction of the project at the Historic Area Remediation Site pursuant to Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act, and the hearing is being conducted in accordance
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with Title 33 of the Code of Federal
Regulations, Part 327.

A second public hearing will be held on
Thursday afternoon and evening, March 1st,
from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Westchester
Marriott, which is located at 670 White
Plains Road in Tarrytown, and also this
evening at 7:00 we'll be repeating this
presentation and taking more oral comments.

These public hearings are sponsored by
the two State agencies that are serving as
the project sponsors for the Environmental
Impact Statement, and those are the New York
State Department of Transportation and the
New York State Thruway Authority, as well as
for the lead agency for the EIS, the Federal
Highway Administration.

The EIS for the Tappan Zee Hudson River
Crossing Project is being prepared in
accordance with a number of laws and
regulations. I've already read some of them
before this and I have a number of them to
read for you.

First, the National Environmental
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Policy Act of 1969 as amended and implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500 through 1508);

Also by the Federal Highway Administration's Environmental Impact and Related Procedures (23 CFR 771);

Also, by the requirements of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (6 NYCRR Part 617.4 in accordance with 6 NYCRR Part 617.15);

Also, a number of other federal and state regulations and requirements, among them which are the Presidential Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice; Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; and Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act;

And then finally, by Title 33 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 325, Appendix B.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the Army Corps of Engineers permitting regulations, the
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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, is cooperating with the Federal Highway Administration in the preparation of this Environmental Impact Statement. As a cooperating agency, the New York District is coordinating with the Federal Highway Administration so that the resulting EIS can be adopted by the New York District for the purposes of exercising its regulatory authority.

These public hearings are being conducted to provide an opportunity to reach the public and solicit input in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. These meetings provide the public one of many opportunities to make formal statements of positions before any project decision-making occurs.

Another opportunity for public input is to submit written comments. I'm going to say more on that later, but let me say for the first, but not the last, time tonight that written comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be
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accepted through the end of Thursday,

Based on the findings of the Draft
Environmental Impact Statement and the
written and oral comments received during
the public comment period, the lead agency,
the Federal Highway Administration, will
prepare a Final Environmental Impact
Statement which contains responses to those
comments received during the public comment
period, including those received at these
public hearings.

To assist interested parties in
formulating their comments, the Draft
Environmental Impact Statement document is
available for public inspection during
normal business hours at established
repositories throughout the region,
including local libraries, town halls, and
other locations. A complete list of those
repository locations is available online, on
one of the display boards cross the hall,
and on a sheet at the registration desk, so
you may pick that up if you like.
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In addition, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement can be reviewed and downloaded from the project website at WWW.tzbsite.com and that website, also you'll find that written on the comments sheet.

The proceedings of this meeting are being recorded by a stenographer right up front here, and a verbatim written transcript will be prepared and made available for review on the project website.

We ask that all persons sign in at the registration table. I know many of you have, I hope all of you have, which is located across the hall in the Adler Room, so that we can make a record of all those who came to this meeting.

After all of these various oral opening remarks, you will have an opportunity to provide written and/or oral comments. Persons may make oral comments today in one of two ways. If you want to make a comment in front of all the attendees, I will call you up to the microphone at the appropriate
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time. Or you may make your comment in
private at any time tonight to another court
reporter who's next door in the Besso Room,
just right in the room over here.

Anyone who wishes to speak either
privately or publicly must fill out a
speaker's card, one of those small
three-by-five cards located at the
registration desk across the hall.

You may also file written comments, or
speak and also file written comments. So
you can do written comments, or speak and
file written comments. There's a form we
have up front. If you want to use this,
that's fine. Or you can submit a letter or
any other information.

Written statements may be submitted in
any of four different ways. And this
information is also available on the comment
form, so I'm going to read it to you, but
there's no need for you to take notes as
long as you pick up one of these forms.

The first way is you can drop off these
comments with us. We have a box at the
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registration table;

Or you may send them to us by e-mail, and there's an e-mail address tzbsite.state.ny.us;

Or you can fax those to us at (845) 454-7443;

And you can do it the old fashioned way, send them by U.S. mail to the following address: Michael P. Anderson, Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project, New York State Department of Transportation, 4 Burnett Boulevard, Poughkeepsie, New York 12603.

And, again, all of that information is on the bottom of this form, so you can use that.

All written comments must be e-mailed or faxed no later than Thursday, March 15th. Or if you put them in the mail, they must be postmarked no later than Thursday, March 15th, 2012.

Written statements, this is very important, will be given the same weight and consideration as oral statements made at...
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this meeting. So I'm going to let you know that if you have a written statement and you also want to speak tonight, you do not have to read everything in it as long as you submit that written statement. If you want to, you can condense that. Just hand in that statement and it will become part of the record and we will be responding to it.

So that everyone who desires to speak, and we do already have a number of speakers signed up, may be heard and their statements made part of the official record, we will not be responding to your questions from the floor at this meeting room. However, responses will be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. We also need to confine oral comments to a length of about two minutes so that everyone who has signed up will have a chance to speak.

Staff remains available in the room across the hall to answer any questions that you may have on any of the issues presented, but those conversations will not be part of the formal record. So please keep these
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things in mind when you get up here to make your prepared remarks.

Before I call on some speakers, I'd like to introduce the people on the dais:

Michael Anderson, from the New York State Department of Transportation;

David Capobianco, from the New York State Thruway Authority;

And Richard Tomer, from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

I forgot something very important. I really apologize for this. As this is a public hearing sponsored by New York State Department of Transportation, we would like to first honor the flag and honor America by asking you to stand, and we're going to do a Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

(All stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.)

MR. BLOCH: Thank you very much.

At this time I would like to call on Elizabeth Novak, representing the New York State Thruway Authority, to make a few comments.
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MS. NOVAK: Thank you, Arnie.

Good afternoon. Thank you all so much.

My name is Elizabeth Novak. I am a representative and environmental specialist with the New York State Thruway Authority, and I'm very pleased to be here tonight on behalf of the Authority and the project team.

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to garner your support and input on the very important document, the Draft EIS for this critical project. And we thank you for your attendance.

This project is critical not only to the region, but is also a vital infrastructure link for the Northeast. The Obama Administration has identified this as a priority project, and Governor Cuomo's office is providing their full support.

Given the scale, complexity, importance, and fast pace of this project, it is being administered in a collaborative manner with the support and participation of numerous agencies and consultants. In
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In particular, the Thruway Authority would like to thank the Federal Highway Administration, the New York State Department of Transportation, and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority for their partnership and collaboration in progressing this important project.

In addition, numerous other federal and state agencies are playing an invaluable role in this project, including the Army Corps of Engineers, who we'd like to thank for being here tonight representing their agency and the project. Other agencies involved with the project, federal and state, include the U.S. Coast Guard, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. And there is a full list of cooperating agencies in the DEIS. But I'd just like to name a few.

While these agencies play a valuable role in the process, no role surpasses that of you, the public, interested parties, and
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elected officials in this very, very important process.

And that brings me back to why we're all here, to thank you for taking the time and attending, in providing input on this valuable project, in learning more about the project, discussing issues with us. And all of our goal is really to make this the best project possible.

So with that, thank you. And I'll hand it back to Arnie.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you, Elizabeth.

Now I'd like to call on Mike Anderson, Project Director from New York State Department of Transportation, to give a brief presentation on the status of the project.

MR. ANDERSON: Thank you and good evening. I'd like to welcome you to tonight's public hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project.

The presentation tonight will hopefully give you an overview of the project's goals,
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a review of what has been studied to date, and will inform you of the process moving forward.

Why replace the Tappan Zee Bridge? It has been determined that replacement of the bridge is the only reasonable alternative. There are many compelling reasons behind this conclusion, including, but not limited to, several significant issues in the main span which have to do with substandard foundations which need to be replaced, a significant number of structural members need to be replaced or retrofitted. There is a need to provide redundancy, and that is not possible with this bridge. There are inherent vulnerabilities in the design of the bridge. And with respect to the approach span, extensive work will be required in the foundations, substructure, and steel superstructure.

The ongoing deck replacement has improved and will continue to enhance the riding surface, but no other significant deterioration concerns have been addressed.
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to date.

The lack of breakdown shoulders is a public health and safety risk and contributes to extensive congestion on the bridge.

The milestones which have been met so far include:

The issuance of a Rescinded Notice of Intent on October 12th, which formally terminated the previous corridor project;

The issuance of a new Notice of Intent on October 12th, 2012, which formally began this current project.

Public scoping meetings were held on October 27th and October 25th in 2011, and those provided the public an opportunity, as well as agencies, to comment on the range of alternatives in an environmental analysis framework. That comment period closed on November 15th, 2011.

On January 19th, 2012, we issued the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

On January 30th, we began an exploratory soil boring program, which I'll
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speak a little bit more about in a few minutes.

On February 9th, we have accepted bids for a pile installation demonstration project to give us absolutely necessary, very critical information to finish the environmental impact and be prepared to move forward with the design.

And we are conducting public hearings tonight and next Thursday in Westchester.

One of the most important goals of the project, and there are three, is to maximize the public investment. Based upon that goal, this project will provide the infrastructure for future transit on the new highway bridges. It will do so by providing additional width, by increased design loadings, by providing certain constant grades, and by potentially spanning the space between the spans at a later date to provide infrastructure for future transit modes.

As I've said, this public hearing is an opportunity for you to learn more about
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and/or comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The DEIS is a comprehensive multi-volume document. It follows a federally mandated process that is based upon the project's purpose and need. From this flows the identification of alternatives and analysis of potential impacts from the alternatives on the environmental, social, and economic condition.

Project scoping, which occurred in October of 2011, determined that the study area for the project would include the four mile extent of the bridge and its immediate approaches in the landing area.

The project limits studied in this DEIS are from South Nyack in Rockland to Tarrytown in Westchester, essentially from the South Broadway bridge in Nyack to the Broadway Bridge, Route 9, in Tarrytown.

In Rockland County, the bridge will tie into the existing Thruway property limits. The extent of the work will require replacement of the South Broadway bridge
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which will in turn affect several adjacent properties.

In Westchester County, the bridge will tie into the existing Thruway property limits. The extent of this work will retain the South Broadway bridge, Route 9, as the new pavement ties into the existing pavement just west of Interchange 9.

The purpose of this project is to maintain a vital link in the regional and national transportation network by providing an improved Hudson River crossing between Rockland and Westchester Counties. The bridge is an integral element of the New York State Thruway, the interstate highway system, and a critical link in the overall transportation network in the region.

The Tappan Zee Bridge, which opened in 1955, initially accommodated 18,000 vehicles a day. Today, over 138,000 vehicles daily rely on this bridge. The Tappan Zee Bridge is the only limited-access truck route across the Hudson between New York City and Interstate 84, 45 miles to the north. It
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also serves commercial traffic between New England and points south and west, and motorists and truckers wishing to avoid New York City congestion.

The ever-increasing traffic volume, especially of commercial vehicles, continues to slow traffic and contributes to the structure's deterioration. Inspections and analyzes have revealed other numerous significant vulnerabilities. Since 2001, over a half billion dollars have been spent on bridge repairs, and it has been estimated that it would take approximately $1.3 billion in the next decade to maintain the bridge's viability. It has been determined that rehabilitation cannot remedy the existing bridge's vulnerabilities, and replacement is the only reasonable solution. This project would address the bridge's substandard structural, operational, safety, security, and mobility deficiencies.

We've identified several important goals that guide the project: To ensure the long-term viability of this Hudson River
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crossing; to improve transportation
operations and safety on the crossing; and
to maximize the public investment in a new
Hudson River crossing.

There are two alternatives considered
in the DEIS: A No-Build alternative and a
Replacement bridge.

The No-Build alternative is a forecast
of future conditions, which includes all
known and/or funded transportation
improvements and major development projects.

The Replacement alternative is a
dual-span structure which allows for
flexibility in the design of the main span
and the approaches.

While the specific design for the
preferred alternative will be left to the
designer and builder of the bridge, there
are specific features that must be included.
These are: Four lanes in each direction;
emergency access lanes and shoulders in each
direction; a shared use bike and pedestrian
path; and the final design for the
replacement bridge shall maximize the
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public's investment by allowing for the consideration, design, and construction of transit modes in the future.

These bridge options have been evaluated in the DEIS. The final configuration, as I mentioned, will vary based upon the successful bidder's proposal.

We looked at a long span option and a short span option. Among other differences between them is that the long span, by virtue of its 430-foot span length, would require approximately 64 piers in the river. The short span, at 230 feet, would require 116 piers in the river. There are other differences which have been identified and evaluated in the DEIS. The final design must meet the environmental constraints which have been identified in the analysis of these options, and will be laid out in the Final Record of Decision.

Tonight we especially want to hear your opinion about the look of the new bridge. The character, look, and esthetic of the replacement bridge must be an appropriate
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gateway for the Hudson Valley region. We ask that you visit the display area where we present two general bridge solutions, cable-stayed and arch. Tonight, and during the comment period, we hope that you will make your preferences known so that this can be taken into consideration for the final design.

The replacement bridge profile will differ from the existing bridge, which has a long, flat grade followed by a steep incline. This abrupt change in grade causes trucks and larger vehicles to lose speed, resulting in congestion and contributing to a high accident rate. From 2001 to 2009, more than 2700 accidents occurred, and this rate is twice as high as the statewide average.

The replacement bridge proposes a more constant and manageable grade that will reduce accidents and improve traffic flow.

In terms of identifying impacts, a wide range of criteria were analyzed in the 23 chapters of the study to determine impacts.
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to the physical and social environment. Most areas of study revealed no adverse impacts, but there were some areas where it was determined that there will be some impacts, particularly during construction.

Among other impacts, we've evaluated the visual impacts to the existing communities and considered the impact to the overall esthetic of the design.

The DEIS evaluates the impacts to historic and cultural resources, including two historic homes directly affected, as well as the bridge itself, which is eligible for listing on the National Historic Register.

Noise impacts associated with the project have been modeled and assessed.

An extensive analysis of the impacts to the overall ecology, and in particular the ecology of the river, has been done. We've evaluated all aspects of the interface, including wetlands, fish, fauna, mammals, birds, et cetera.

In order to minimize community impacts...
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from the construction process, the selected bridge designer will develop and adhere to a construction impact mitigation plan known as the Environmental Performance Commitment.

To date, over 50 specific Environmental Performance Commitments have been identified. The public's input is sought and valued in order to ensure that all appropriate measures will be included in the final construction documents. These EPCs have been developed in detail in the DEIS, and we ask that you take the opportunity to improve and expand these with your input.

Some examples of Environmental Performance Commitments have been developed for transportation issues, community character issues, land acquisition displacements and relocations.

With respect to noise, the use of shrouds or other attenuating curtains for pile drivers, compressors, and generators will be required. Electric powered equipment should be utilized instead of diesel whenever possible. Construction
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staging areas must have appropriate noise attenuation materials installed, and so on.

In terms of air quality, contractors must make use of clean fuels, and the best available technologies will be used. All construction equipment must meet latest emission standards or higher. Tug boats will have limited combined emission rates.

In terms of the energy and climate change, the use of recycled material, locally-sourced materials, and renewable fuels will be used to the maximum extent practicable.

In terms of topography, an erosion and sediment control plan must be developed and followed.

Working in the river will involve an extensive array of measures to minimize impacts to the ecology during pile driving installation, and hazardous material sampling has been done and will continue through the project in the event that hazardous materials are encountered.

Pile installation demonstration
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project, which I mentioned earlier: The installation of piles is a critical part of this design and construction. There are several different types and poor types of geotechnical materials that the new bridge piles must be driven through and founded in order to support the new bridge. Currently, a soil boring sampling and testing program is under way to better define conditions deep in the soil beneath the river.

The Pile Installation Demonstration Project, the PIDP, will collect information about the installation of different sized piles at different locations. The environmental effects of those installations will be monitored. This information will be provided to the bidders as they develop their design and develop their bid packages, and seek to mitigate the environmental effects of pile installation during construction.

We took bids on February 9th, hope to award the project by the end of the week,
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and all work will be completed by July 2012.

Section 4(f) is the applicable federal regulation regarding the evaluation of publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife refuges, or public or private historic sites of national significance. The requisite Section 4(f) analysis has been completed and is included in the DEIS.

Looking ahead, we look forward to receiving your comments tonight and over the next two weeks. Please review the DEIS at our website or at several locations throughout the region. The list is available outside.

Based on the comments received and subsequent findings of the DEIS, a Final Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared and issued in July 2012. We will then expect a Record of Decision from the Federal Highway Administration later this summer. We believe August.

And at this point, I would like to thank you again for your time, interest, and continued participation in this very
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important project.

And I would also ask that they turn the
air conditioner on. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Before we turn to you, I
just wanted to ask Mr. Richard Tomer from
the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to make a
few brief remarks.

MR. TOMER: Thank you. And I do
promise to be brief.

Good evening. I am Richard Tomer. I'm
Chief of the Regulatory Branch for the
New York District U.S. Army Corps of
Engineers. I will be the presiding officer
on behalf of the Corps of Engineers at
today's public hearing.

The Corps of Engineers is here today to
obtain information and evidence and ensure
coverage of Corps of Engineers' concerns to
assist in the regulatory review of a
permanent application by the New York State
Thruway Authority for the transportation of
approximately 1.5 million cubic yards of
dredge material associated with the
construction of the replacement of the
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existing Tappan Zee Bridge for the purpose of placement of this dredge material at the Historic Area Remediation site in the Atlantic Ocean for the purpose of remediation.

Activities related to the construction of the replacement bridge itself are regulated by the United States Coast Guard.

The Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for nor an opponent of the proposed work. Our role is to determine whether the proposed activity is in the overall public interest. This hearing will play an important part in that determination for us.

Finally, the New York District will issue another Public Notice upon receipt of all required dredge material test results and analysis. That future Public Notice will include Historic Area Remediation site test data and a determination as to whether the dredge material is suitable for placement as remediation at that site.

That future Public Notice will be
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posted on the New York District Corps of
Engineers' website. And that website
address is www.nan, that's n, as in Nancy,
an.usace.army.mil, M-I-L. We will send out
an e-mail announcement when the future
Public Notice is available for review on our
website.

If you are not currently on our Public
Notice e-mail distribution list and you
would like to receive that e-mail
announcement for the future Public Notice,
you can provide your e-mail address to one
of the staff members at the registration
desk that is across the hall. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. So now we're
ready to hear from you, those who want to
make oral statements. I just want to remind
you that anyone who wishes to speak at this
part of the meeting must first have filled
out a speaker's card.

I already have a list of people who
have signed up, but you can still do that
across the hall.

In accordance with our policy, elected
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and appointed officials will be given the
first opportunity to speak. Others will
then be called to make their statement in
the order of which they were registered.

As I mentioned, also, in order to allow
as many people as possible to be heard, we
will not be responding to comments or
questions, and we ask that you try to
confine your comments to two minutes. I
will let you know when we're coming close to
the end of those two minutes so that you can
try to wrap up your comments.

If your comments are in writing, you
can simply hand them to anyone on the
project team or put them in the tray in the
other hall across the way. If you've
actually already submitted comments before
today in written form, you do not have to
resubmit them. They are already part of the
record and will be responded to.

Again, just to remind you, written
comments will be accepted by the Department
until Thursday, March 15th. And, again, on
the comment form and at that website you can
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find out how to submit those comments.

So I'm going to call each person
forward by name at the appropriate time.
And I'll be asking you to speak at the
microphone in front here by the court
reporter. I only ask that you be careful of
the cord in front here. That's the one
place where we don't have it taped down.

The key, my goal for tonight, is to
make sure that everyone who wants to speak
has a chance to do so.

So I'm going to call the first speaker,
and that is County Executive Scott
Vanderhoef from Rockland County.

MR. VANDERHOEF: Thank you very much.
I'm Rockland County Executive Scott
Vanderhoef. Thank you for the opportunity
to address this hearing.

First of all, I want to thank
Commissioner Joan McDonald for her
courtesies, having visited with us a number
of times with respect to this project.
Having shared our concerns with her, she's
been open and we greatly appreciate her

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presence at those meetings and her outreach to Rockland County.

That being said, I think it's important to note that Rockland County has a healthy distrust of bridges from time to time.

During the 1950s when this bridge was built, there was very little public consultation, there was a lot of damage done to Rockland County's homes, running straight through Rockland County the full 12 miles. Rockland County has, of course, changed dramatically because of that bridge and we are obviously, therefore, very interested in this particular bridge.

That being said, the fact is that the bridge is not just a crossing on a river. The bridge represents all 12 miles of Rockland County's landscape. It represents the question of sustainable development, it represents environmental issues, it represents a whole host of things. So it's not merely a crossing on a river.

And, indeed, the 10 years that it's taken us to get this far, much of the
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discussion has been on the question of the corridor and how we might get a rail across that bridge and get mass transportation across it.

The fact of the matter is that we need to discuss this bridge not just in terms of jobs, which are clearly a credible, important issue that the Governor has outlined, and we support it, but it also needs to be looked at in terms of the broader issue of what it means to Rockland County, Westchester County, and our region.

And that means that you simply can't, in fact, at the last minute, at the last moment, think of some sort of mass transportation issue. Transit has to be part of the consideration of this bridge. It cannot be an afterthought.

The fact is, for those of us who are troubled by the pace at which we have gone through with this, we are delighted that the Governor is moving forward with this kind of urgency. The question of transit, though, is critical. And while I happen to propose

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or I support, rather, a commuter rail ultimately and a rail that will get us to Stewart Airport from Palisades Center Mall or other places, the fact is that bus rapid transit is less expensive, should be considered in the design of this bridge, and should be part, certainly, of a construction, we hope, either during or shortly thereafter the construction of the new bridge.

Finally, if that can't be afforded, if it can't be done simultaneously, which we would prefer, then how about this: We currently run a Tappan Zee Express across the bridge from various locations in Rockland County. We saw an 82 percent increase in ridership between 2000 and 2011 in the Tappan Zee Express ridership. The commuter lots are full.

How about allowing those buses in the process of this new bridge to run on a dedicated lane, one of the lanes that are being considered for the bridge, to run from here or places in Rockland County across the
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bridge without being congested to get to
Tarrytown station or perhaps to White Plains
as a start to a kind of mass transit
solution? At least it would get people
across the bridge, get them out of
congestion. And if we're going to think
that way, and I think we should, and I
proposed this to the Commissioner of DOT,
that we look at that seriously as we go
ahead, if we're going to look at that in the
design issues with respect to Tarrytown,
access off the Tappan Zee Bridge into the
Tarrytown area to the Tarrytown train
station become critical in the design phase
of this bridge. If we can create some sort
of way to create a transit, even a temporary
measure of transit to move more people and
get cars off the bridge, we ought to do it
now.

In the long-term, we need mass
transportation and I hope just "not
preclude" means we are actively and lively
talking about the future of this Tappan Zee
Bridge bus rapid transit and commuter rail.
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And I thank you very much for your time.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. I would like to call the next speaker, Harriett Cornell, the Chairwoman of the Rockland County Legislature.

MS. CORNELL: Good evening. I'll be submitting detailed written comments on the various impacts, but tonight I have a few salient but brief points to make.

I wanted to call attention to the fact that since 1998 when the bridge was first announced by Governor Pataki, there have been four governors and one acting governor, all with different priorities. This governor I give great credit for finding a way to accelerate the project, but I don't believe this is meant to preclude dialogue and thoughtful consideration of local and regional concerns of what is essentially a new project.

Over the long period of study since 2005, public fears and concerns have, to a great extent, been mitigated by the care
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taken by the State team to listen to the
public and make changes where prudent and to
explain why not when necessary.

Consequently, I have a series of
suggestions.

Ten years ago, I was skeptical of the
need for a new bridge and I'm now convinced
that a river crossing that addresses and
corrects the substandard features of the
existing bridge is essential for the future
economic well-being of the Lower Hudson
Valley.

However, that doesn't mean that we
shouldn't take the extra time to answer the
myriad of questions surrounding the
financing, construction, visual, and
environmental impacts before proceeding with
the project. So I urge an extension of time
for public comment.

As the symbol of the Lower Hudson
Valley, there is no reason this bridge
shouldn't be the most beautiful structure in
the New York Metropolitan Region. And,
unfortunately, and I thank Mr. Anderson for
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talking about the esthetics, but unfortunately, what comes across in the DEIS is a very utilitarian approach to bridge design.

Among the stated goals of this project, there is no mention of building a bridge that is worthy of the majestic Hudson and the Lower Hudson Valley, nor does it indicate esthetic goals. This is best exemplified in the description of the lighting for the proposed bridge, which I won't read, except to say, think of the magical lighting on the towers of the George Washington Bridge at night. We want a bridge for 150 years that is a beautiful bridge. Deserves it.

Because of the bridge's visual significance and its proposed design life of 150 years, the public rightfully wants and should have a chance to review its appearance and voice their opinions. But the ability to conduct this review has been hampered by several factors.

First, there are the two engineering
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designs we saw before. They're not designs, they're engineering options that the public must understand the implications of the short span and the long span with dramatic and different visual impacts.

The emphasis in the DEIS is on the design of the span, the structure over the navigable channel, and whether it's cable-stayed or an arch structure. But the causeway leading to the span is probably more visually prominent to residents and motorists than the actual center span. The causeway design is presented as though there is only one engineering solution, and it's very challenging to visualize the impacts of a proposed structure that is significantly higher than the current bridge and, in the case of the long span, has a deeper or thicker cross section.

Secondly, the designs presented in the DEIS are considered preliminary. And the DEIS actually indicates that the design-build firm may select an entirely different design than that included in the
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DEIS. So, again, it's difficult for the public to comment when those designs are going to undergo substantial changes. But I think it is important to comment on your ideas.

Thirdly, the public has limited tools to understand a project of this complexity. The drawings are problematic to interpret if you're a lay person. If the lead agencies are serious about obtaining genuine, thoughtful input from residents and commuters, then people need to understand what it is they're being asked to comment on. And I think that the best and most efficient way to fully comprehend the impacts is to see a model of the proposed structure, at least where it meets land. A model could actually hasten the review process and dispel misunderstanding.

Supplementing the model should be computer-generated renderings that can be made to illustrate just about any perspective conceivable.

The RFP for selection of the
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design-build firms will include esthetic
guidelines, but it's unclear whether it will
include a citizen's design review committee.
And it must. Such a public review process
led to a far superior solution for the
Bunker Hill Memorial Bridge designed in
Boston rather than the original Scheme Z
design.

Committing to such a review process
will assuage people's concerns that the lead
agencies are downplaying or even ignoring
the importance of the design issues.
Consultation and public review are essential
and worth the effort 1,000 times over.

While the need for the Hudson River
Crossing Project is understood, the lead
agency would do a disservice to themselves
and to government in general if they don't
recognize the public concern over the lack
of public transit. The proposed three
and-a-half to five plus year construction
period is going to bring major impacts of
noise, dirt, vibration, detours, road
closures, and lengthened commutes to the

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communities adjacent to the bridge. In order to restore public trust in this project, the rehabilitation should begin by announcing a timetable for recommencing the planning process for mass transit and the corridor improvements. The agency responsible for shepherding this project should be identified and the Thruway Authority, the DOT, and its partner agencies must publicly commit to seek funding for construction of mass transit in the future.

And, finally, the public needs to know the facts about financing the bridge, the transit, and the road improvements, which I have said for eight years.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you very much.

Our next speaker is Ellen Jaffee, Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee.

MS. JAFFEE: Thank you very much. It's a good evening for us to be able to have this dialogue regarding the Tappan Zee Bridge project. We have spent over 10 years in the wilderness trying to find the right
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path for this project, and the Governor finally has given us the direction we lacked to move forward, and we must do so with full coordination between the State and the localities that will be most impacted by this project.

The concerns of our riverfront communities must be heard, and I am heartened by the representatives of the DOT. Commissioner McDonald, she has been so receptive, as has her staff, to solicit and respond to the very concerns that we have been bringing to her.

Just recently, the other evening, at a meeting in South Nyack with the Thruway Authority and the South Nyack officials and community, I'm so pleased, Michael Anderson, you and the engineers were so receptive to the concerns that were being raised, and your willingness to be responsive and to consider some of their suggestions and their thoughts about the South Broadway Bridge. And so I want to thank you for that receptiveness.
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Well, that said, I want to be clear from the outset that the bridge is not just crossing any river. We know that. It is our treasured Hudson River. And for this project to succeed, and I believe it can, we must develop trust that our State understands our connection to what we think of as "Our River" because it is the very reason why so many of us gathered here came to live in Rockland County.

So we have to assure that our Hudson River is protected, that every possible environmental review is put in place to assure that our river, the Hudson River and the environment is protected.

With regard to our riverfront communities, I will briefly outline some of my concerns, which some I've already shared with Commissioner McDonald.

First of all, restoration of South Nyack's economic center. When the original bridge was constructed in 1952, nearly all of South Nyack's economic infrastructure was destroyed. Our hope is that the State will
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work with the Village to set up at least a footprint for potential future development. The State could modify its plans as not to preclude such a project in the future. All parties must be at the table to explore realistic possibilities regarding financial opportunities.

Two, the impact on existing businesses. Business owners and community leaders in the Villages of South Nyack and in Nyack must be assured that the construction phase will not obliterate the flow of consumers necessary to keep these businesses vital. Again, we need an all-hands-on-deck approach to ensure that our local economies do not regress during the construction phase. Financial assistance is certainly important to this process.

Three, a vehicle pound to proposed Thruway buildings abutting South Nyack. Having borne the burden of the construction for the first Tappan Zee Bridge, South Nyack is rightfully up in arms over the unsightly vehicle pound that exists on the Thruway and
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the proposed police barracks.

At present, the vehicle pound is an eyesore providing an inauspicious welcome to Rockland County, to say the least. I stand with the Village in opposition to the new construction of Thruway buildings. The land should be used for the Village to regain economic stability. South Nyack has sacrificed enough during the Tappan Zee 1.

We must assure that there is -- you know, in the taking of homes, as it is done, there must be complete sensitivity to the local homeowners and the community. And I am going to request a walk-through with some of those on the Thruway Authority with local members of the community and elected officials to assure that their voices are heard, community members, homeowners, their voices are heard during this process, especially during the beginning process of the staging area.

And I mentioned that the other evening and I will continue to ask for that walk-through.
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Also, the communication and the meetings must continue during the construction phase and respond to all the environmental issues, quality of life concerns, the noise concerns, the air quality concerns that many of the residents are now bringing to me and suggesting they are worried about.

So what we have to do is open up community event, bringing the authorities to these meetings to respond to the concerns and assure the community that they hear that they're very worried about air quality, they're very worried about noise and vibration. And they need to understand exactly what is going to be taking place as they move forward.

I have other concerns that I will not list at this time.

In the spirit of trust and cooperation, I would like to see the designation of an ombudsman who will be available to the public on both sides of the bridge so that constituents and their other concerns can be
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addressed in a timely manner. I think that would be very, very helpful to the community.

Finally, as we move forward, there will be many challenges that we will face. Working together, we can assist the river villages emerge stronger, not weaker, from the process. And economic strength is vital to the commercial health of the entire region.

And clearly, as we move forward, we also must assure that there is a plan in place after we move forward with this bridge for bus rapid transit for our communities and for the corridor.

Thank you very much.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you very much.

I'd like to call next State Senator David Carlucci.

SEN. CARLUCCI: I'll be brief to move it along.

I just want to thank everyone that is here tonight and everyone that's participated in this very important process.
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The Tappan Zee Bridge is the cornerstone of the Hudson Valley. It is an important gateway for commerce, trade, and commuter purposes that we have come to rely on for generations.

I would like to thank the Governor for talking on this important project. Fast tracking the replacement of the Tappan Zee Bridge after years of planning will provide our area with much needed jobs and bring economic growth for our region and beyond.

Many of us here today know that a new bridge is desperately needed and we welcome the inclusion of an immediate dedicated express lane. At the same time, we know that it is essential to ensure that the transportation needs of our area are met well into the 21st century. To do that, we must advocate for the inclusion of a future mass transit component in the final design.

I remain confident, with the continued hard work and advocacy of those gathered here today, the leadership of our Governor, and the determination of the people in
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New York, we can build a bridge to the 22nd Century that generations will use and enjoy. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you very much. I'm going to call the next two.

So the first one is Joe O'Brien, the District Representative from Congressman Eliot Engel's office, to be followed by Councilwoman Milagros Lecuona.

So is Mr. O'Brien here? No?

Then the Councilwoman. And after her will come Maria Lorenzini, Trustee from the Village of Nyack.

MS. LECUONA: I thank you. I also would like to thank the Cuomo administration for having pushed this project ahead. But I also have a concern about the mode of transit. I am trained as an architect and an urban planner. And when we do urban planning, we plan for the future. And making this project with no transit mode is planning for yesterday, not even planning for today.

So we need the transit mode now as a
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component of this project, and there are many reasons why, but one of the reasons I'm going to tell you is that you're going to be going through some major construction phases here that is going to impact especially Tarrytown and Nyack. And what's going to happen is, if the bridge opens in 2017, then the transit mode is coming back when? So does that mean that they're going to be doing the mobilizing of the whole area through 2017 and then bringing the contractors back in again?

So we are looking right now into a design-build, which is a very smart way to go. I really am happy to see that in those areas we are going to be being more effective with money and timing. But on the other hand, it's also kind of interesting to see that the mobilization of the contractors is not being seen as something that can be also saved by doing it at the same time.

I am wearing another hat here today. I'm also the cochair of the Tappan Bridge Park Alliance.
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And although the DEIS that was presented here today was released in the middle of January, last week Governor Cuomo came with a statement in the newspaper that he is supporting, at least at this point he thinks it's an exciting idea to look into the existing Tappan Zee Bridge as a greenway when the new bridge is built.

Now we are hearing that the demolition of the bridge will cost 150 million. For me, that's really a very conservative number because they are not saying how the bridge is going to be demolished, they are not saying how the PCB is going to be removed from under the bridge.

So with that said, it means that we are going to have many millions, more than 150 millions that we can dedicate to the maintenance of this new proposal of turning the Tappan Zee Bridge into a park.

And I'm going to give you just a couple of things for you to think about. We can have 33 acres of parkland instead of tons of debris that I don't know what was said here...
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tonight was going to happen with those tons of debris.

We can adapt the use of the bridge to an international destination, instead of destroying 56 years of important history for the region. It is a unique, beautiful three-mile bridge. It is really unique. So why destroy it? Add jobs and economic profit to the region instead of throwing away what will be $1.5 billion by the end of 2017, in addition to the 150 plus more millions in the demolition.

We could preserve 56 years of marine habitat instead of disturbing the PCB in the bottom of the bridge.

For those of you that have a concern on the footprint on the new bridge and the existing bridge, keep in mind, the new bridge is being designed much higher than the existing Tappan Zee Bridge. So the footprint could be the same one, but the connection to the two bridges will happen at different heights. A bridge is not a monolithic structure. The piers are going
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to be allowing for -- it's like one bridge
goes here and the other one goes down there.

We have a website,
www.tappanbridgepark.com. And since this is
an issue that has been appearing frequently
we are going to be putting our rendition
showing you how this can be done. And I
hope that you support our idea.

And let's go for the mass transit.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Before Marie Lorenzini, Joe
O'Brien is here from Congressman Eliot
Engel's office.

MR. O'BRIEN: Thank you very much.
Thank you for the opportunity to address the
Draft Environmental Review for replacing the
Tappan Zee Bridge.

Safety must be our number one priority,
and therefore the rehabilitation of the
existing bridge is not a realistic option
and we must proceed with its replacement.
As you know, the Tappan Zee Bridge is the
only heavy traffic bridge between the George
Washington and the Newburgh-Beacon bridges.
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The Tappan Zee Bridge is more than that as it is a vital link between upstate and downstate economies. It also serves New England in a very large way.

So while I agree that a replacement bridge is necessary, the concerns of the local communities who will be impacted by this huge construction project must be taken into account. The DEIS does a thorough job of looking into these concerns and into many of the mitigation techniques. However, the fact is that this construction will be a burden on local communities. The noise from the construction, the taking of local property, and traffic reroutes will impact the local communities on both sides of the Hudson. They will be bearing the burdens for a project which has huge regional and national implications. We must do all we can to make sure for those who bear this burden, that it's as minimal as possible.

That being said, this project moving forward is necessary for our region and our country. A new bridge will be a boon to the
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local, state, and regional economies. The project is expected to produce 2800 direct construction jobs and 2150 induced jobs in the region with a combined economic impact of almost $400 millions. I was also pleased to learn the plans will include a biking/pedestrian path which is a marvelous benefit for the local areas.

A mass transit component of this build must be closely examined. This is an opportunity to remake our region's transportation system, and we must look at every possible element. In doing so, we must strive to keep costs and the build time as low as possible.

Mass transit can be a great benefit to Rockland County and the region as a whole.

As the project moves forward, I look forward to more of these public events so we can all understand the impact the new Tappan Zee Bridge project will have on our region. I look forward to continuing to work with all involved on making sure the bridge is built efficiently and with as minimal impact.
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on its neighbors as possible.

Though, that is just one opinion. As
the Congressman who represents both sides of
the bridge, I look forward to hearing from
the people who will be directly impacted by
this project. They deserve to have their
voices heard, and I look forward to
continuing this public dialogue as the
bridge replacement moves forward.

Thank you very much. The Congressman
did want to be here tonight, but Congress is
in session and that's what he has to do.

Thank you again.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Our next two
speakers will be Marie Lorenzini, Trustee
from the Village of Nyack, to be followed by
Tish DuBow, the Mayor of the village of
South Nyack.

MS. LORENZINI: I'm not going to be
addressing the bridge or any of the
discussion concerning the bridge.

I've been a member of the I-287
Tappan Zee Bridge corridor project from day
one. I've attended the meetings. We've
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gone through the drawings. And I understand the components and the partners and the collaboratives on this are the transportation groups as well as people discussing safety issues.

We have pinpointed several safety issues in the corridor. Those are not being addressed. You've got an exit off of the Palisades Parkway at 9 that as you're coming on to exit onto the Thruway, you've also got people coming on to Palisades going south. If I'm not mistaken, DOT has indicated that's one of the highest accident areas along the Thruway. That's not being addressed.

You've got the incline on Route 59 in Nyack that was mentioned earlier that slows traffic to get onto the bridge in the Nyack exit. That's not being addressed.

You've got other issues that are safety issues that by just putting a bridge is not addressing them. If the bridge is going to go in, I think safety in the corridor needs to be addressed. It's not just a bridge,
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it's what happens to those who are in the corridor or who use the bridge. And that is a very important situation. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you very much.

Tish DuBow from the Village of South Nyack, to be followed by Andy Stewart, the Supervisor of the Town of Orangetown.

MS. DuBOW: First of all, I'd like to thank our neighboring villages for their support, for their concern over the problems that are going to be facing us as well as them, and their concern for the people of our Village.

As you probably already know, houses are being taken from South Nyack, not from anywhere else. Welcome to 1952 all over again. Once again, the State plans to bulldoze part of South Nyack.

The original Tappan Zee Bridge project had a devastating effect on our Village, cutting it in two. There's the lower half and the upper half, some people don't know that they belong to each other, and in between is the Thruway corridor.
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The State now claims that the impacts to South Nyack of replacing the bridge are -- guess? Insignificant. That's the term, I believe that's the proper term we see.

This is ridiculous. In 1952, New York State itself destroyed over 100 South Nyack homes and our entire business district in order to build the Tappan Zee Bridge. And you see it now down in the area in the circle for Exit 10. It's a mess. Take a look at it the next time you go by or when you're walking over.

Now, 60 years later, they plan to take more homes away from South Nyack. And this reduces South Nyack's population, but in particular the tax base. That means everyone else's taxes in the Village of South Nyack will rise. This is a sacrifice for which South Nyacks gets not much in return. It's unconscionable to expect South Nyack to bear the burdens of this project, especially when the replacement bridge will do absolutely nothing to alleviate traffic
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congestion, noise, or air pollution.

And with the elimination of mass transit, it also does nothing to address the original goal to improve mobility.

After 10 years of talks, it's now apparent that the public input has been met with lip service. The State is studying only two bridge alternatives and both affect South Nyack identically. There has been no serious discussion with South Nyack of alternatives to support the community needs.

We in the river villages deserve better. And, again, I thank the river villages that are part of the support group and I welcome your comments.

South Nyack has promoted a practical plan to reconnect our Village and bring jobs, economic sustainability to the river villages again. This region needs the connection between the two parts of South Nyack. Smart planning would integrate the new bridge with our local development project. This is consistent with the New York State Smart Growth Public
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Infrastructure Act, which requires projects to, quote, promote sustainability by strengthening existing communities. It is also consistent with the bridge project's own stated goal to maximize the public investment.

Our Village officials are preparing a written response to the DEIS which will be submitted shortly. The Village of South Nyack is absolutely committed to seize this opportunity to bring lasting benefits, jobs, and sustainability to the river villages' region. We deserve no less. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Mr. Stewart? And after Mr. Stewart will be Nancy Low-Hogan, Rockland County Legislator.

MR. STEWART: Good evening. Andy Stewart, Supervisor of the Town of Orangetown here tonight with our Highway Superintendent, Jim Dean, along with many concerned residents.

And certainly the insight of the speakers who have come before me are impressive. And I know the room is full of
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people with good ideas and real concern for our community.

I just want to start by voicing what I think is a feeling many people have, which is a feeling of gratitude that our bridge is the focus of the safety improvements that can be brought and the jobs and economic development that comes with that work will accrue to our locality.

I just want to put it -- everybody has got their laundry list of things they wish could be done differently or included, and it can go on and on. But I have just one or two things.

Number one, which was mentioned before, Exit 10 is enormous and loopy as you come back around onto 9W and South Franklin in Nyack. My understanding is that that was designed oversized because of another highway that was supposed to connect and never happened. And, again, I just want to reiterate the voice of my neighbors and others, give that land back. Let's use it for economic development. Use it for
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business, use it for parks, use for places
to live, use it for something a little more
attractive than parking trucks and the kind
of stuff that happens there now.

Number two, tolls. The toll to the
George Washington Bridge is about $12. The
Tappan Zee it's about 5. I'd like to know
now, if possible, how high that toll is
going to go and can we somehow lock it in,
you know, sort of like your rate on your
mortgage, which is what it will add up to if
you have to go back and forth a lot. I'm
worried about where that toll is going to be
and what the impact on all of us is going to
be. So I'd like to see some commitment or
promise, however preliminary, related to the
price on the bridge as far as the toll goes.

And another thing which is sort of a
minor thing, but every time I go across the
bridge I notice it. When you go across the
George Washington Bridge, you can see
through the railings, all the safety stuff
to keep people from falling off the bridge.
You can see the City, you can see the water,
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you can see the boats.

When you go across the Tappan Zee Bridge, there's a concrete -- there's a barrier there, I don't know what it's made out of, which if I'm driving, you know, my small car, it blocks the view. If you're in a truck, you can see over it. I feel like just as a minor request in terms of design, can we make --

A VOICE: Watch the road. Watch the road.

MR. STEWART: Bearing in mind that I'm watching the road the whole time, I like to see if there's some boats down there. And I think that we can design this bridge in a way that doesn't, you know, minimize that small pleasure that many of us feel when you come over and you're looking out at the grand Hudson River.

Thank you very much.

MR. BLOCH: We appreciate humor, but we please ask that you give deference to the speakers and allow them a chance to speak.

So Miss Hogan, to be followed by Mayor
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Jen White from the Village of Nyack.

MS. LOW-HOGAN: Thank you very much. I am a Rockland County Legislator and I represent District 17.

District 17 includes the villages of South Nyack, Grandview, Piermont, the Hamlets of Palisades, Sparkill, Blauvelt, and Tappan, plus a small portion of West Nyack and Clarkstown. This district is arguably the area that is the most directly impacted by the new bridge construction. South Nyack, in particular, is literally where the rubber meets the road, where the combined direct impacts of new road construction, noise, land taking, and staging areas will be the most dramatically felt and experienced personally every day for five or more years by the residents who live there.

My very specific request to the DOT and others is that you implement very specific measures to mitigate these direct impacts, and that you make a pledge to South Nyack, in particular, to restore our Village to a
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state that is better than it is today, that you use your influence with the Governor's office, DOT planners, and others to support the ideas and plans being presented now by Village officials, by Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee, and others.

We also request that you do the following: Prevent on/off ramp design flaws, mitigate South Broadway Bridge replacement inconvenience, consider the economic development potential of South Nyack, and enhance the appearance of the areas directly adjacent to the Thruway and the on/off ramps.

I know that I speak for all of the river villages, the Rockland County Legislature, our Assemblywoman, and our State Senator when I say to you, we will do whatever we have to do to work with you. Our hope and our expectation is that you will leave South Nyack and the river villages in a better state than they are today.

Thank you very much.
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MR. BLOCH: Thank you. And Mayor Jen White from the Village of Nyack.

MS. WHITE: I'm going to begin where I began six months ago, by thanking Governor Cuomo for his determination to get something done. He is a man of his word, a man who doesn't waste time on idle political chatter, and a man who wants to solve big problems.

I'd also like to thank my neighbors for their attendance and participation.

It's only natural that the speed of the bridge development plan has caused many of us who live in the shadow of the Tappan Zee to take a deep breath. It must be constantly acknowledged that some of our neighbors still suffer from the mistakes of the original construction plan. I'm asking the Governor to join us and take a pause on the fast-track bridge development process to hear some of our concerns.

This cannot be solely a bridge for traffic traveling across the Hudson to points north and south and east and west.
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This must be a project that respects those of us who have chosen to raise our families and invest our life savings on the spot where this bridge is anchored.

Each and every municipality within actual viewing distance of the bridge is asking the Governor for an extended period of public comment because we all have real concerns and we need access to the information to alleviate these concerns.

I, like Andy, am terribly worried because I can't find any concrete information on the cost to travel over the new bridge. Toll projections by those not involved in the project are running anywhere from 9 to $30. The State is saying that they will be within reason, but they're not explaining what within reason means. The Governor this week stated that the tolls would be the main source of funds for the bridge.

All of those facts are enough to make commuters really uncomfortable. While $9 will be difficult for those of us who use
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the bridge daily to get to work, $30 without a reliable public transportation option will make it impossible. It would be ironic if a project intended to create jobs effectively made it impossible for residents of Rockland & Orange Counties to get to those jobs they already have or to seek work beyond their home counties. This cannot be a bridge that meets the needs of distant regions by sacrificing the needs of the region where the bridge is located.

The fact that a foot and bike path are part of this plan begins to create a clear benefit for the local communities. The traffic of thousands of tourists and cyclists that will use the bridge as a gateway to the natural wonders of the Hudson Valley and the opportunity to enjoy the spectacular recreation such an amenity creates are a real benefit. But it's not enough.

I worry that the bid and build process will put the oversight into the builder's hands rather than the government regulators
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who are there to protect us.

I worry that the increased noise in our river villages and the heavy impact of construction on our river and waterfront.

Among the many details I find lacking in this fast-track plan is clear information about how demolition of the old bridge, should it occur, will occur.

We are the communities that will lose homes and face increased noise and years of construction. We are the stewards of a river that, despite all our best efforts, may become more polluted in the name of progress.

We need a safe river crossing. We know that. But in addition to a world class foot and bike path, we need commuting to be affordable. We need to know that there is a future transit option being detailed, not just talked about, whether across the bridge or somewhere nearby. We need an encounterable construction process that can mitigate noise and air pollution and harm to our river.

And I believe we need a bit more time...
and a bit more access to information to work these things out. As the families that will bear the negative burden of a multiyear construction phase and the uncertain outcome of any eventual project, we deserve to be held in as high or perhaps higher regard as those travelers and truckers who will fly by our villages at 65 miles an hour over a shiny, sturdy, and modern new bridge.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: That completes my list of elected officials. Are there any elected officials here who I don't have written down who wanted to speak?

If not, okay, I'd like to start calling other names. I'm going to do two at a time. I would appreciate it if you could use the mike there.

I'm also going to ask, we do have a lot of speakers, I know we've gone overtime, but I know it's very important that we hear from elected officials. So I want to continue and please ask you to try to stay to two minutes.
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Our next speaker will be Charles Callan, to be followed by Victoria Ficco-Panzer.

MR. CALLAN: I'm a resident in the area. My mother lives on South Broadway. I live down on River Road.

I'm concerned and I want to share the concern that many people have expressed tonight about the ongoing noise impacts.

After the construction is done, the methodology used in the DEIS is primarily ground-based. I would point you to Section 12-3-1-1 which uses assumptions about dropoff rates that are ground-based. It does not address the very real matter about noise as sound is conveyed over water.

I would encourage to measure that not just within the immediate vicinity of the bridge, but also in the surrounding communities. The noise is audible, clearly audible as far south as Piermont, as far north as Hook Mountain, and out into Blauvelt Park.

In addition, there is significant vibration. But yet in Section 12-3-1-2, the
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DEIS states that because there's no discontinuity between the highway surface and the bridge, there's no need for the DEIS to include vibration impacts. People who live in that area can very clearly hear the vibration impacts.

I have sound recordings of them as a result of the redecking project which I'd be happy to share with you. They occur at all times of the day and all times of the night.

It's interesting that we don't actually know what we're going to get but, of course, wishful thinking operates in all of us. We hope that the noise will actually be lower than it is today.

I spoke with several of the engineers on the project. None of them was able to point to an example of the bridge that we're currently going to get so we could look at it, more than just a model. Instead, we can only listen to it and understand again.

So I would exhort you to bring forward examples of where this particular type of construction is now in existence. We'll
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have a better sense of what that looks like and that might help to eliminate some of the unknown.

I would also ask that you learn from the very real lessons and the redecking project. The resulting noise came as a surprise to officials at the New York State Thruway Authority and the Department of Transportation. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Ms. Victoria Ficco-Panzer, to be followed by two speakers together, Jocelyn DeCrescenzo and Jacquelyn Drechsler.

MS. FICCO-PANZER: Thank you. I am a resident of Salisbury Point, having lived there since 1996. I'm 68 years old and one of the reasons I chose to live at Salisbury was that I felt it was a peaceful and safe place for me to live out my years. I have enjoyed the time I've been here since I love Nyack and the many activities it offers.

My life has been in turmoil since the impending construction of the new bridge was announced. I know that the environmental
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study is being rushed through in order to begin construction of the new bridge as soon as possible. However, I also fear that the negative impact of new construction on the present residents is not being given enough consideration.

For the time the new bridge is under construction, anywhere from four to six years, there will be increased dirt, noise, and traffic issues, such as heavy machinery and detours.

Our property values have declined since the construction of a new bridge was announced and only a few units have been sold since the public has known that our development will be severely impacted by this project.

No investigation has been done regarding the structural impact of drilling on our retaining wall along the river or on the foundations of our buildings. Our in-ground pool will be negatively affected by the dirt and air pollution caused by the project. We will be unable to use it for
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the entire time the bridge is under construction, thus further diminishing our property values and quality of life.

Finally, once the new bridge is completed, because of its average height, the first three floors of our buildings will be looking up onto the floor of bridge deck instead of the sky. We will have 10 lanes of traffic spewing air pollution onto our development, adversely affecting our shareholders, many of whom are elderly and in diminished health.

All this, to build a new bridge that will be obsolete the day it opens since no provision for mass transit has been included.

We have been told that a new bridge is necessary in case of an earthquake. If we do indeed have an earthquake, Indian Point will be a greater concern than any bridge.

I respectfully request you reconsider the impact of a new bridge on our community and to put some safeguards in place before construction begins to protect our peace,
MR. BLOCH: Our next speakers, you know who you are, to be followed by Brian Keho.

MS. DeCRESCENZO: My name is Jocelyn DeCrescenzo and I live in Valley Cottage.

The year was 1418. And these are quotes, "Whoever desires to make any model or design for the vaulting of the main dome of the Cathedral under construction by the Opera del Duomo - for armature, scaffold, or other thing, or any lifting device pertaining to the construction and perfection of said cupola or vault - shall do so before the end of the month of September. If the model be used, he shall be entitled to a payment of 200 gold florins." Again, the year was 1418.

This competition attracted carpenters, masons, and cabinet makers with proposals to solve a variety of problems. The Opera del Duomo reassured all prospective competitors that their efforts would receive a friendly and trustworthy audience. The construction had as much to do with civic pride and was
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to be "a more beautiful and honorable temple
than any other."

Competition between architects was an
old and honored tradition. In 448 B.C., the
Council of Athens held a public competition
for the wall memorial it planned to build
for the Acropolis.

Public comment as well as competitions
were the norm throughout the ages in
democratic society. I don't think we're
seeing as much of that here as we need to be
seeing. Time has gone by, but we seem to
not even be up to that rate of democratic
society.

In the building of this new Tappan Zee
Bridge, we're only duplicating, and very
poorly at that, what has already been shown
to not work. If the new bridge is built
with only the same premise in mind, to get
cars across the bridge without supplemental
mass transit options that could be built in,
such as magnetic rail trains, we will be in
exactly the same situation in future years.
As more cars are accommodated to cross the
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bridge through widening it, there will just be more congestion. We need to lessen the carbon footprint, not increase it. If there was a public access transportation component to this problem, it could decrease the traffic congestion by approximately 10 percent, which would allow for a potentially better auto commute. The public mass transportation could work if there are connections at either end to move the people of areas of connection with other transit options.

MR. BLOCH: Could I ask you to sum up?

MS. DeCRESCENZO: Oh. Okay. My sister will sum up.

MR. BLOCH: Okay. Very quickly.

MR. DRECHSLER: Okay. Competition breeds in innovation in our very competitive and capitalistic world. This project should not be fast-tracked with no wiggle room for expansion of public mass transit or for alternatives technologies that could enhance our means and ways of getting around.

It maybe an eyesore.
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There will be extra risk factors with the 70-foot escalation on the Rockland side of the bridge. There are already high winds that we deal with going across that bridge.

The existing bridge actually can be quite beautiful when you're driving over it and looking at it, and the new one needs to be so as well.

MR. BLOCH: If you could close your remarks? We're about three minutes.

MS. DeCRESCENZO: We're two different persons.

MR. DRECHSLER: There needs to be coordination of existing ramps and highways instead of creating more mess and confusion.

As with Robert Moses' design, the roadways will become even more clogged and crowded in future years. This will not alleviate the present conditions, only replicate them in future years.

Let competition and innovation lead to a thing of beauty.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Brian Keho, to be followed by Gerald Fincke.
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MR. KEHO: Hello, my name is Brian Keho. I'm the Executive Director of the New York Bicycling Coalition, and we represent bicyclists and bicycling groups throughout New York State.

We have participated for many years in the process of choosing a new replacement bridge for the Tappan Zee, and we are very delighted to see that there will be a bicycle and pedestrian facility that's included in the DEIS. We will continue to be available for conferral as the design-build process continues, and feel free to call upon our expertise.

I want to note that the demand for bicycling is increasing rapidly in the region, and with rising fuel costs and health concerns, congestion, parking constraints, that demand is going to continue to rise into the future. The bike/ped facility that appears in the DEIS would be a significant addition in that it would allow bicyclists to move more freely throughout the region and elevate bicycling
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to its rightful place in the transportation
mix in the region.

I also want to note that the facility
would also be a draw for significant
recreational and tourism benefits to the
region.

We do hope that in the final analysis
there will be provisions for transit and
that whatever transit service is provided
will include provision for bikes on buses.

Thanks for your time.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Our next
speaker is Gerald Fincke, to be followed by
Kristian Matthews, the Town Councilman from
the Town of Tuxedo.

MR. FINCKE: My name is Jerry Fincke.
I'm from Orange County, to the north of
here. My wife, Cecelia, and I own a small
business. It's a ShortLine bus terminal in
Monroe, a commuter bus terminal serving that
whole region. And the name of the business
is The Depot, Inc.

I'm here tonight to urge you not to
make the same mistake that Rochester made
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half a century ago.

By the way, the people in my county beat Rockland County in terms of the fast track. I herald the fast track that's going on with the new bridge, but 240 years ago, we built a huge chain at the direction of George Washington in 10 weeks and spanned the river in 10 weeks to protect West Point. So I welcome this thing on a fast track.

The lesson in Rochester was, half a century ago, Rochester was a boomtown. It had either the first or second highest per capita income in the United States and it was one of the first of the medium-sized cities, many followed, to build an outer loop. In fact, it built an inner loop and outer loop, I'm sure you remember or recognize that, around the city -- well, except to the north where Lake Ontario is.

The problem is that it designed that loop with a complicated interchange where the inner and outer loop met to meet the needs of the foreseeable future, not taking into account that it was a boomtown. And it
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opened up in the early '60s.

In 1966, I graduated from law school in Michigan and got an attractive offer, because they had plenty of money in Rochester, to go to work for a law firm in Rochester. And I moved to Rochester. And immediately, every morning you'd see on television horrific stories about what they called "The Can of Worms," the traffic backups, that this so-called improvement had, in fact, done just the opposite.

MR. BLOCH: Can I ask you to come to a conclusion?

MR. FINCKE: And that's how "The Can of Worms," the name got invented, and now it's part of the American lexicon.

If we don't have a dedicated bus lane right now, then we're missing the bet because the future is now. We are selling in our terminal one and-a-half times as many bus tickets as we did a year ago. Everybody is switching to buses and we need to have a dedicated lane.

Don't make the mistake that Rochester
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made. The future is here right now, just as it was in Rochester.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you.

I want to call on Mr. Kristian Matthews, Town Councilman from Tuxedo, followed by Ross Pepe.

MR. MATTHEWS: My name is Christian Matthews. I'm representing the Tuxedo Town Council.

Tuxedo could greatly use an Exit 15B on/off ramp at Route 17, formerly 210. It's been kicked around for a number of years and the time is now.

Route 17 traveling south of Tuxedo into Sloatsburg is heavily used at certain times of the day and is -- well, we'll put it this way, well used.

We could also use a sound barrier wall in the east village part of Tuxedo. If it's at all possible that you could look into that in the environmental impact that I believe is going to be taken into consideration.

That's all. Thank you very much. I
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appreciate the time.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Mr. Pepe, Ross Pepe, to be followed by Ivan Vamos.

MR. PEPE: Good evening. Ross Pepe, President of Construction Industry Council of Westchester and the Hudson Valley, although tonight I'm speaking on behalf of ReplaceTheTZBridgeNow.Org., which represents thousands of local and regional businesses, as well as residents and taxpayers who depend on the Tappan Zee Bridge daily for safe and efficient commuting, freight deliveries, leisure travel, as well as those companies and professionals who provide dependable and expeditious emergency services.

First, we need to congratulate the Federal Highway Administration, the New York State Department of Transportation, and the Thruway Authority for delivering on the promise to have the DEIS available for review and comment on schedule. It's remarkable after nine years of procrastination and delay that this has
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taken place in such a short time. The agencies now are focused on this vital infrastructure project.

The Tappan Zee Bridge or the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing should be built now. Being the most significant project to impact the Hudson Valley region since the construction of the existing bridge in the 1950s, this plan to replace the aged Tappan Zee with two new spans including full interstate highway lanes, breakdown lanes, emergency access, and a pedestrian/bike lane is exactly what is needed to handle the present and future needs of the region, state, and entire Northeastern United States.

It is an integral connection of the nation's interstate highway system that is used to transport goods and services to local, national, and global markets.

As for commuters traveling between Rockland and Westchester, the new crossing will create the opportunity to efficiently and safely travel to work and home.
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When completed, the new span will also provide a stimulus and opportunity to finally bring mass transit services to the region.

Right now, New Yorkers need two things: Jobs and a new bridge. The decision is easy. Move forward and regain the glory as a national powerhouse of construction, innovation, and world class transportation, or forever regret we didn't take advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity.

The workers, citizens, and motorists, and thousands of local businesses in the Hudson Valley, New York State, and Tri-State region understand the opportunity that stands within our grasp. We, as a state, must live within our means and build what we can afford now, but prepare for the future a region-wide transportation system.

The economic gains of a new crossing will bring jobs, economic opportunities, and a better quality of life as byproducts of moving forward.

In closing, the DEIS was clear. There
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will be no negative impacts to local
communities or the ecology of the Hudson
River. The decisive moment has arrived.
Build a new Hudson River crossing now.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you very much.
I ask you once again, please let
speakers have their say just as they will
let you have your say.

The next speaker is Ivan Vamos, to be
followed by Jan Degenshein.

MR. VAMOS: My name is Ivan Vamos. I'm
from the New York State Bicycle Coalition,
as Brian Keho was before me.

I have been the person that has been
working with this project for over 10 years,
attended every meeting that you had, and was
able to provide some input that was, I
think, useful.

We have been always cognizant of
getting a practical bicycle/pedestrian
solution that would serve the communities
and the region well. It has all the
functions that Brian had mentioned.
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However, I want to add one more issue. I am a bicycle commuter. I have been since 1965. I'm now retired, but I still go to meetings on a bike. And my distances were in the range of 12 miles to 16 miles. This will get you to most of the major communities on both sides of the river. When parking becomes an issue, financial issues come up, or when people are not able to afford or able to, actually, because of their age, drive. It is a perfect solution for helping you complete a total travel.

And if you have mass transit system, and I hope we do soon, we suggest you provide some bikes on buses which work very well in many communities and provide a further outlet for that type of travel.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Our next speaker is Jan Degenshein, to be followed by Arthur Leibowitz.

MR. DEGENSHEIN: Thank you and good evening. I'm Jan Degenshein. I am Chair of the Rockland Business Association. I'm also

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a practicing architect planner in the Rockland Community, and I am a 50 plus year resident of the Nyacks.

The bridge and corridor process stalled last year due to one critical impediment: The lack of $17 billion of funding. Last fall, federal money was identified and bridge construction can now fast track with the stipulation that the construction costs will not exceed 5 to $6 billion, and mass transit would be implemented at a later date.

It is ironic that many who initially opposed mass transit are now threatening to thwart the construction process unless a rail element would operate immediately upon ribbon cutting for the new span. In response, the public has now received further assurances from Governor Andrew Cuomo.

In the outset, the proposed bridge will be structurally engineered to accommodate future rail transit which can then more easily be implemented once all environmental
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and funding issues along the 30-mile corridor will have been resolved.

By constructing the bridge in this critical manner, the safer and more efficient crossing will occur sooner, construction jobs and manifold collateral economic benefits will be introduced to the region when most needed, long-term regional economic growth will be promoted, along with quality of life benefits to the counties on both shores of the Hudson, a more responsible environmental solution will have been achieved, and we will also accomplish a head start on the ultimate goal of incorporation of mass transit.

With a commitment to support the additional moving loads of mass transit, all stakeholders stand to gain from an earlier construction date and an earlier completion date. For the benefit of generations to come, Albany and Washington got this one right.

Now, I do want to thank Mike Anderson for inviting comment on the different
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designs. There are beautiful cable-stayed bridges and there are also beautiful arch bridges. The two examples that were shown are sadly uninspiring. I hope that there is some enforcement of real quality design to the bridge that is eventually done.

And, finally, as a long-term resident of South Nyack, I will be somewhat impacted by the noise and pollution and the traffic during the course of construction. There will probably be a diminution of property values to a small degree, nothing as much as my neighbors two and three blocks to the south, some of whom will have their environmental autobiographies severed by the course of the bridge happening.

What I hope that you will do, and I'm quoting W.B. Yeats, a poet from many, many years ago, Tread softly, you tread on our dreams. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you.

The next speaker is Arthur Leibowitz to be followed by Steven Reich.

Mr. Leibowitz? No?
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Okay. Steven Reich, to be followed by Kate Slevin.

MR. REICH: Hi. My name is Steven Reich. I'm the Business Manager for the Laborers in Rockland County. I'm their representative.

Some of the things that we just wanted to make sure that everybody knew is number one, we all know the economic impact in the last few years here in Rockland County. We really can use the jobs here in this area. So just from a purely selfish standpoint, that's great.

But representing people, I've been on that bridge a lot myself, I've got people that I represent that have spent decades out there. Safety-wise, this thing needs to be done now. We can't wait any longer. The financing is available. We have to take advantage of it now.

As long as mass transit is able to be added at a later date, we should be able to get this thing going and get it moving. I think it's important that we make sure that
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as soon as we get this bridge going, we start working towards a mass transit concept. And so, you know, like anything else, when the guys get rolling, they just keep going. We can make this thing get done quick and move right up the Hudson Valley corridor. Let's go right up to Stewart Airport and get it all done. And in 10 years, we're rocking and rolling in the best place in the United States.

But for the people sitting in this area, something has got to be given back to you people. I understand that. If it means finding some way to connect your community, if that helps, whether it be the park of the old bridge, whatever can be done I think needs to be taken into consideration as much as possible while the bridge goes forward.

And just to close, I just want some people to know that besides the government people and the people here, a lot of people have been working behind the scenes in the trades. Ross Pepe already spoke. I mean, thousands of hours have gone into talking to
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people and getting things done and, you know, making sure that labor management works together and we can have the best and most skilled labor to get this bridge done, which you have right here in the Hudson Valley, by the way.

And one other thing. I'd like to make sure that local people are used, PLA is in place, and anybody who wants to look at it from the point of view of the tradesmen, Ross' website at ReplaceTheTZBridgeNow.org is the place to get that information.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Our next speaker is Kate Slevin, to be followed by Al Samuels.

MS. SLEVIN: Good evening. My name is Kate Slevin and I'm the Executive Director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign. And we're a regional policy watchdog organization that's been involved in the project since the late 1990s.

Tonight I'm representing BRTOnTheBridge.org., which is a website and
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a coalition of statewide environmental, good
government, and labor groups, and tens of
thousands of citizens that support public
transportation as part of this project.

Tonight we're here to say that we have
long supported replacing the Tappan Zee
Bridge, but we believe New Yorkers deserve a
better plan than the current one. The
current plan will promote unsustainable
growth and saddle our children with our
problems.

New Yorkers will be paying off this
project for decades, so Governor Cuomo has
to get it right and he should get it right
now.

State officials recently stated that
the bridge would be designed not to preclude
transit. I would like to be clear about
something. There are no plans at this point
in time to build public transit as part of
this project. The State has confused people
by combining two transit ideas; a rail line
into Manhattan from Rockland and
cross-border bus rapid transit, and they've
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combined it into one gigantic daunting, expensive option.

The public should question the state's assurances that public transit will be added later. Why?

One, the DEIS shows that the bridge's engineering including narrowing of the bridge at landings in Rockland and Westchester could squeeze out both bus rapid transit and rail;

Two, there are no studies for proposed plans in how or when this so-called future transit service will happen;

Three, there is no mention of making space for bus rapid transit on the new bridge in the environmental documents. Space that could presumably be used for bus and HOV lanes is simply labeled as emergency access lanes;

Four, rough design proposals for future rail are the same ones that were thrown out by the State years ago because they are too complicated or expensive to build;

Five, history shows that adding transit
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later means nothing. The George Washington Bridge was supposed to include transit but never did.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement raises more questions than it answers and it must detract these deficiencies before this project moves forward. It does not fully consider the economic impacts of this project, and it is not transparent about project financing.

As of now, there is no money identified for this project and no one knows how much tolls are going to be up or who is going to be paying for this project. In fact, one estimate by Charles Komanoff shows that tolls could triple to pay for this bridge. If we are going to be paying $15 to cross the bridge, it better be a bridge that is designed for the future.

And for the construction workers in the back, we support infrastructure investment. And I just want you to know that transit projects create a lot more jobs than bridge or road projects alone.
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The DEIS includes questionable assumptions about the cost of bus rapid transit. The State generally inflates the cost of bus rapid transit but offers no explanation of why. Thirteen to twenty million dollars per mile is an average. Based on New York State Department of Transportation numbers, they're saying that the cost would be 166 million per mile. This is ridiculous. It needs to be addressed.

The DEIS does not consider a variety of ways to improve public transportation. The idea that the State can do nothing short of $5 billion to improve transit in the corridor is absurd. New York City and other regions are greatly improving bus service with a few million dollars. Bus service is flexible and bus improvements can be phased in over time.

They have to consider a range of options. The DEIS does not consider this range of alternatives as required by federal law. The State must consider a small, less
expensive bridge design. Why do we need a bridge that is twice as wide as the current one? This is not adequately justified in project documents. The State should consider another alternative that includes bus rapid transit, bus service improvements, and other efforts, all of which would reduce traffic on the bridge and could save significant amounts of money and reduce the environmental impacts of the project both during construction and in the long-term as more people shift to transit and leave their cars at home. None of this has been studied in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

MR. BLOCH: Could you close --

MS. SLEVIN: Yes. One minute. The DEIS provides scant information about other environmental concerns including all the community concerns, air quality impact, environmental justice, or the project's impacts on the region's land use patterns and sprawl.

Building a bridge without public transit ignores public comments and facts
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and findings in a 10-year long planning process. It contradicts the State's own data and does not plan for the future. But most importantly, it ensures that we will be leaving our children to solve the problems their parents and grandparents have created. This is the opposite of sustainability.

Let's replace the bridge, but let's do it right. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Al Samuels is next to be followed by Vincent Pellecchia.

MR. SAMUELS: Thank you. Hi ya, Mike.

I'm Al Samuels. I'm President and CEO of the Rockland Business Association. I'm a 48 year resident of Rockland. I have served on the I-287 Tappan Zee Task Force since it was created.

And I currently have the privilege of being a gubernatorial appointee to the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council. And as a member of that group, I was chosen by my colleagues and my peers to head what we call the Inhibitors Work Group. The Inhibitors Work Group is tasked with the
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assignment of identifying those issues that would inhibit economic development in our region.

One of the main inhibitors was the current Tappan Zee Bridge. We identified businesses basically in transportation, warehousing, and distribution that didn't even bother looking at our part of the State in terms of relocating their businesses because they were concerned that the current bridge would be shut down before a new crossing was built. The future of our region cannot accommodate that.

We commend you for the expeditious way in which this is progressing. We urge you not to be distracted nor deterred by much of what you hear from people that in many cases are obstructionist through this process.

However, as a 48 year resident of Rockland, it would be callous and imprudent of me not to recognize that I have fellow Rocklanders who have grave concern, and I do appreciate their concerns, but I still maintain, we cannot deter the movement
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forward, the forward movement of this process.

The Governor and the Lieutenant Governor are very much involved with the Regional Economic Development Council and have assured us that if we alter what you are doing currently, we will add two years to the time it takes to get a shovel in the ground.

I do not understand why elected officials who know better choose to ignore this. I do understand where the general population might not be as well informed and where perhaps they would overlook it. I urge you not to overlook it.

After a dozen years of involvement in this process, we cannot afford two more because we will lose the moment. The Governor of this State, finally a governor of this State, capitalized on an opportunity. Andrew Cuomo has capitalized on an opportunity that exists now. I don't think it will exist in two years. Please stay the course. Thank you.
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MR. BLOCH: Thank you.

Before I call the next speaker, I just wanted to mention that some of you may have come for the 7:00 presentation. We still have a number of speakers so we wanted to continue with them. We should be able to get to the next presentation within a half an hour. So I apologize for that, but we do have a lot of speakers.

A VOICE: Can't they speak at the end of the presentation?

MR. BLOCH: I want to see how many we can get through first.

So our next speaker is Vincent Pellecchia, to be followed by Jeff Frediani.

MR. PELLECCHIA: Good evening. Thank you for your time.

My name is Vincent Pellecchia. Today I'll be speaking on behalf of Scenic Hudson.

Since 1963, Scenic Hudson has worked to protect and restore the Hudson River as an irreplaceable national treasure and a vital resource for residents and visitors and it is the largest environmental group focused
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on the Hudson River valley.

After nearly a decade of study and broad consensus that the solution to replace the Tappan Zee Bridge requires some form of mass transit, the DEIS has neglected this public input and instead determined that a project with a mass transit component is not feasible at this time. An historic opportunity to change the transportation picture in the Hudson Valley for the better presents itself in the replacing of the Tappan Zee Bridge. A 21st century solution meeting the transportation needs of the future by including mass transit leaves a positive legacy on transportation and land use patterns throughout the region.

The preferred alternative, simply rebuilding the old span with one extra lane, will not solve the modern regional problems across the corridor. In fact, just two years ago, the DOT Scoping Summary stated that mass transit offers the only realistic means of addressing the requirements of improving mobility in the corridor. It is
safe to say that there are no changed circumstances that warrant abandoning that finding.

The DEIS analysis of consistency with the State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Act is insufficient. The Act requires that state infrastructure projects be consistent with tenets of smart growth. Contrary to the goals of that Act, the preferred alternative will likely encourage continued auto dependency.

The DEIS only considers two possible alternatives: The proposed Replacement Bridge alternative and the No-Action alternative. Other reasonable alternatives, including immediate addition of mass transit and the construction of a tunnel rather than a bridge, are excluded without adequate analysis or justification. Detailed cost and environmental analyzes of these options should be presented in the DEIS before these alternatives are rejected.

Contrary to prior studies finding that public transit is necessary to reduce
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congestion and air pollution, the DEIS claims that an extended automobile-only span will not increase regional air pollution. Given New York State clean air and climate change goals, the project should actively be seeking to decrease such emissions. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Our next speaker will be Jeff Frediani, and forgive me if I'm mispronouncing names, to be followed by Charles Westwater.

MR. FREDIANI: Good evening. My name is Jeffrey Frediani. I'm a Legislative Analyst with AAA New York State. And AAA New York State serves more than 2.7 million members residing in New York State. As we all know, the Tappan Zee Bridge is one of New York's most critical transportation links. It not only connects Westchester and Rockland Counties, it also plays a vital role in the economic life of the Northeast and Mid Atlantic regions.

Built in 1955 and designed to last 50 years, the Tappan Zee is now well beyond its
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lifespan and has been under endless repair to keep it operational.

This is a vital project not only for New York State but a project with regional and national significance.

The existing traffic-choked bridge is at the end of its useful life. A new bridge will ensure regional mobility, mitigate traffic congestion, and enhance the safety for the traveling public.

While design plans call for a combination of transit modes which can be added at a later time, this project simply cannot be delayed so that such systems are operational on day one. This would not only further delay the construction of a new bridge, but would also increase costs by hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Tappan Zee can't be sustained by undergoing endless repair work to keep it operational. Just a few years ago, the bridge underwent, among other maintenance, a two-year $150 million causeway partial deck replacement.
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And taking it out of service would have a severe and unprecedented impact on the region. Just imagine the paralyzing effect a bridge closing would have if traffic into the boroughs was diverted into an already overburdened George Washington Bridge and Lincoln and Holland Tunnels. And I am sure many individuals in attendance today have seen a History Channel documentary on the country's crumbling infrastructure which dramatically depicted the Tappan Zee falling into the Hudson River.

It's time to fast track a new Tappan Zee, and we commend the leadership of Governor Cuomo, DOT commissioner McDonald, and Thruway Director Madison for moving this critical project forward in an expedited fashion and making the replacement of this outdated bridge a priority for quick action.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Charles Westwater, to be followed by Nancy Proyect.

Mr. Westwater? No?

Okay. Nancy Proyect? Am I pronouncing
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your name correctly?

Well, we won't know. Okay.

Orrin Getz, to be followed by Judith Hirschorn.

MR. GETZ: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Orrin Getz.

First thing I would like to do is turn in my badge from the Traffic and Transit Stakeholders Advisory Work Group. This was part of the old project that was unfortunately stopped. And since we're not having a transit alternative, I guess I really won't be needing my badge any more.

There is a very critical need on this new bridge for a bus lane. The bus lane can't be diverted to doing something later. It has to be done right now. When the bridge is built and design of the roadway is done, the bus lane has to be there. There is no alternative to build this later and have it done in an economic way.

Also, what's being totally ignored is that road improvements are desperately needed west of the Tappan Zee Bridge between...
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Interchange 11 and Interchange 14A. This is where the road narrows down from four lanes in each direction to three lanes and causes enough congestion that backs up onto the Tappan Zee Bridge even when the bridge is set for four lanes in the priority direction.

You cannot go ahead and build a new bridge without some plan to take care of this section of the roadway. It will not reduce traffic congestion unless that is handled.

The other thing is, if you'd like to see a beautiful design of a stayed cable construction bridge, you should take a look at the Ravenel Bridge in Charleston, South Carolina. This used a stayed cable construction design that has made an elegant structure that has been an asset to the community. And if you look a little more into the history, it took down old bridges that kind of looked like the Tappan Zee Bridge. So I say that we should really look into a good, impressive stayed cable
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construction bridge. It would be an asset and a jewel for the Hudson Valley.

The other issue is funding. And as I've said before at many of the meetings that I've attended, the main source of funding for this new Tappan Zee Bridge has to be included in the new five-year Federal Transportation Funding Act. Right now, unfortunately, that Act is stalled in Congress in the House of Representatives, and that's a most unfortunate situation.

But we need that funding. New York is a donor state. It has to get money, transportation funds, back from Washington so that we can go ahead and build this bridge.

The other issue is that if loans and if money is borrowed to build this bridge, we have to know the cost of the debt service. We have to know the impact of this debt service on the tolls that are going to be charged on the bridge and on the taxpayers that may have to make up the difference if that be so.
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So I think we need to get a clear-cut financial plan that can be promoted to us and clearly explain that it is viable.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Our next speaker, Judith Hirschorn, to be followed by Catherine McCue.

MS. HIRSCHORN: We're going to combine our presentations in the interest of time.

MR. BLOCH: Okay. Thank you. Could you state your name?

MS. HIRSCHORN: Judith Hirschorn.

MS. McCUE: I'm Catherine McCue. I'm the President of the Salisbury Point Co-Operatives in South Nyack, New York. Judy is our secretary.

We represent here this evening 124 units and 170 residents who feel disenfranchised in this process.

We have reviewed the DEIS, the thousand pages, the many appendages, and we have hired a professional civil engineer to help us understand the contents of this weighty document as it is really couched in
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professional language and not for the layman.

Wholeheartedly, we support Harriett Cornell and our local mayors of South Nyack and Nyack and the statements that they have put into the record this evening. And for reasons of time, I will not repeat that.

We at Salisbury want to see a full proposed simulation of the bridge from our shores. What the interface between the bridge and South Nyack will look like is more important to us at this moment than the mid span design. Yet, we share the concern for a beautifully graceful construction mid span. Simply, what will the bridge look like from our shores?

We are concerned about the dust, the dirt, the noise, the vibration, and the overall upsetment the building and the final product of the new bridge itself has on our residents. And, sadly, as of today, we have no answers.

How will the staging for the construction impact our residents? Vicki
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Panzer has already referred to the concerns we have about our retaining wall, our pool, the loss of our southern bucolic Hudson River views that will be impaired and permanently destroyed if you go through as planned and don't share what you are doing with us.

We have long lasting health concerns due to the poor air quality and the noise everlasting. What is going to happen during construction? Will we be living with a 24-hour a day construction site for five and-a-half years? We have no answer to that.

We ask you to respond. We request a face-to-face meeting with our political leaders and with representatives from the proposed bridge crowd, you guys, to help us understand all of these very important issues.

We do believe and we do know that a new bridge is necessary. What we don't want is to be living as David under the wrath of Goliath. Thank you.
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MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Our next two speakers, first Steven Abel to be followed by Jeff Zupan.

A VOICE: Steve Abel left.

MR. BLOCH: Steve Abel left. Okay. Our next speaker is Jeff Zupan, to be followed by Joe Galligan.

Is Joe Galligan here? Yes. Okay.

MR. ZUPAN: Good evening. My name is Jeff Zupan. I am a senior fellow for transportation for Regional Plan Association, an independent urban-planning research and advocacy association.

We are pleased that New York State is moving ahead aggressively with plans to replace the Tappan Zee Bridge. The current bridge is severely outmoded and requires expenditures of tens of millions of dollars a year to maintain it in good working order.

We also applaud Governor Andrew Cuomo's strong commitment to building a bridge that can accommodate bus transit and future commuter rail.

There is little doubt that a new
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Tappan Zee Bridge should be built. It will be no more costly in the long run than the continuous repair work. It will be safer and, because of the inclusion of adequate breakdown lanes, it won't suffer the monumental traffic jams every time there is a fender-bender or a flat tire. The current bridge, which lacks shoulders for its entire three-mile span, is an impending traffic nightmare each day.

It is clear that the funding to implement a full-scale bus transit program along the entire length of the Westchester/Rockland corridor is not available at this time. What's more, based on our research, it isn't clear whether there will be sufficient demand by the time the bridge opens in 2017 to warrant a dedicated bus or bus-and-carpool lane system.

We do believe it is crucial to design both the new bridge and the approaches in Westchester and Rockland Counties in such a way that they will be able to accommodate
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bus service and rail transit once they are needed. The State should begin the bus service planning now, monitoring traffic patterns carefully so that the infrastructure will be in place for transit when it's necessary.

We encourage the State to make public a complete financing plan. Planning for future transit services should be done openly and include peer reviews to fully vet planning, design, and engineering assumptions. Enough time should be allowed to make sure there is no sacrifice in design or esthetics. Otherwise, there is the danger of repeating the mistakes of the first bridge.

To ensure that the design of the bridge and adjacent land can one day accommodate bus and rail services, it is important that the plans represented, and this is perhaps the most important point I want to make today, in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and design and build instructions don't preclude those transit options. This
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would strengthen the confidence on the part of the public that transit on the Tappan Zee Bridge would be a state policy and transit would be built in the corridor.

To set the stage for meaningful bus transit improvements, the new bridge should include a three-quarter mile bus-only ramp at the Westchester County side at the time the new bridge is built for buses to directly reach the Tarrytown train station, providing a congestion-free link between bus and rail. The ramp needs to be integrated into the initial construction of the bridge. This will be an important down payment to the public for the eventual bus service and give riders an early transit service benefit.

Plans for the new bridge call for the construction of ample service lanes on both the east and westbound spans. The current design show that there will be adequate room to carve out future bus and bus-and-carpool lanes in the space when demand warrants, while maintaining enough room for the
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breakdown lane. If the bus-and-carpool lane isn't over subscribed, the officials should consider opening the lane to single occupant vehicles willing to pay an extra toll to bypass congestion.

Providing mass transit is important for many reasons. It reduces congestion, improves air quality, so on and so forth. But a minimum level demand is required for transit to be cost effective. The flattening of traffic on the Tappan Zee Bridge in the last 10 years - it is not 140,000, it's only 134,000 a year - coupled with anticipated drop in traffic once higher tolls to pay for bridge construction are put in place, might result in less congestion on the bridge and its approaches when the new bridge first opens. Thus, there might not be adequate demand to warrant special treatment for buses at that time.

But there's little doubt that traffic will grow and congestion will appear, fueled by population growth and economic development in the Hudson Valley. At that
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time it will be necessary to have an alternative that gives bus riders and carpoolers an option that by passes the congested traffic. However, if the bus and carpool treatment is only on the three-mile bridge, as the current plan calls for, and not on the adjacent highways that flow into the bridge, there won't be sufficient travel time savings to encourage most drivers to switch to buses or carpools.

To encourage the use of a dedicated bus and carpool lane, future improvements will be needed to be made elsewhere along the corridor on both sides of the bridge.

Last paragraph.

These eventual improvements in the Rockland County side should include revamping the five-mile corridor along the New York State Thruway to add a fifth lane back to Exit 11 and a fourth lane back to Exit 13. Similarly, improvements on the Westchester side are needed.

There are other complimentary measures that transportation officials could employ
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to control congestion. These are, by the
way, ideas that I've continually, repeatedly
brought to the attention of the team that's
worked on this over the last 10 to 12 years
without satisfactory result. These include
variable toll pricing by time of day on the
bridge, transit and carpool incentives by
employers, measures such as guaranteed rides
home for transit users and carpoolers, and
totally cashless, toll booth-less toll
collections to permit high speed toll
collections for all drivers. These measures
should be given the careful exploration they
deserve.

Most of these improvements don't need
to be ready, that is the physical
improvements, by 2017.

MR. BLOCH: If you could please finish
up.

MR. ZUPAN: The financing would be
difficult given current budget constraints,
but planning for the creation needs to begin
right away.

Thank you very much.
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MR. BLOCH: Thank you. I know a number of people have left who were going to speak. If you feel you can't wait, there is a court reporter next door. I just want to give you that option.

Our next speaker, Joe Galligan, to be followed by Gil Hawkins.

MR. GALLIGAN: Good evening. Or is it good morning? I would just like to say that I don't have my shirt and tie on, nor do I -- I'm not a politico. I'm just Joe Average. And Joe Average means that I had a relationship with the Tappan Zee Bridge for over 42 years. I saw it every morning and every evening driving over to my job in Westchester. And I know how important it is as an economic force in this area because that's how I fed my family.

So the thing we've got to remember is that I think she should have retired when I did, which is a few years back. But what I'm looking at is, we know that we don't have the money for mass transit at this time from what I understand. Remember, like Will
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Rogers, I only know what I read in the paper.

But when you look at this thing, the bridge itself should have provisions for a rail line. There should be no question about that.

Number two, it's suicide not to have a bus lane there. I've been going over that bridge for 40 some-odd years and in the morning, that son of a gun is backed up all the way to Airmont Road. And all that does is make a lot of noise and a lot of carbon monoxide. You've got to get the buses there and people will ride that bus. But not to do it is suicide. That's my first point.

Point number two, the old bridge. I love the old bridge, but according to the gentlemen up there, we're losing a lot of the superstructure and the under structure. And I understand there's a nice class of worms that moved up from the ocean and are eating away the wooden piles there. And they're not going to go anywhere. When we stop the bridge, they're still going to be
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there.

And I can remember for over 20 years, every year you're scraping and painting. And you're going to still be doing that even though you have a new bridge if you want to keep that as a park.

If they make a park out of it, you're going to put fertilizer in there and be watering it in. All that's going into the river. And then all of a sudden, why are the fish dying? Because of this fertilizer that will be going into the Hudson.

Okay, number three point. I understand there's a lot of the same guys or same construction outfit that worked with 287 who screwed that up royally, who put in a bid and then found, oh, we found this, we found that, we've got to override. What kind of engineers have we got? Then they said they went to the State and they said, well, the State engineers did it, or the architects.

Well, that's passing the ball back and forth. What we need is competent people that are doing this engineering and
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architecture, not guys that are acting like they were in their freshman year at MIT. We need good, substantial, adequate engineers and architects to design this, and it's no problem. They shouldn't be finding things like they did on 287.

This thing has been beat to death for 10 years. We should know what all the problems are. So when a guy puts in a bid, that's the bid. There's none of this stuff of overrides. And the fact is, we should put in there that if you don't meet certain deadlines, you're penalized and you pay us back for not getting the thing done in the final time. We are tired of incompetent engineers and architects constructing our transportation system. We want it stopped. We, the people of New York, deserve better.

A VOICE: Bravo, bravo.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. All right a few more. Gil Hawkins followed by Andrea Composto.

MR. HAWKINS: Hi. My name is Gil Hawkins. I'm a sculptor and I'm the
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Environmental Director of the Hudson River Fishermen's Association. I've been a member of the Stakeholders' Advisory Group since the beginning, as well.

I've been involved with this project since the first public meeting, representing the Hudson River Fisherman's Association. I've been impressed with the environmental studies and the detail that has been associated with the impact on the river. In fact, we were pushing for a portion of the old causeway to remain as a fishing and recreational pier. Our motto is to fight for the Hudson.

However, I have a professional life as a sculptor and over the years I have found one thing lacking; that is, the absolute absence of the esthetic design of this span across the majestic Hudson River. Maybe some of you can remember my stating at meetings that this bridge will be placed between two of the most beautiful bridges in the world, the George Washington Bridge and the Bear Mountain Bridge. So you'd better
get it right. Most of the time I got the answer, we will take care of the bridge's look at the end, or we will hold a competition, successfully kicking the can down the road.

Well, it is the end. And now a fast track threatens to push significant design aside.

It was Marshall McLuhan who said, "We become what we behold. We shape our tools and, thereafter, our tools shape us."

If the esthetics of the bridge are not considered in the world forum of bridge design, it will be a bigger gap than Sarah Palin's Bridge to Nowhere. Not only can hundreds of thousands of people see the bridge from their doorsteps, but millions of people passing over and under the span for the next century will be offended by a bad design. Let's get this one right. Part of the consideration of saving the old existing structure was doomed by its own ugliness.

So to all of the engineers, politicians, and citizen volunteers who have
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worked on this project, pause a minute and reflect on how you want this project to look. It's our legacy. Consider the percent of money spent on the function versus the form, because good form does not necessarily follow good function.

Consider also in the EIS creating a blue ribbon panel to weigh the tremendous responsibility of the esthetic design of this bridge. Nothing less would be done for any less significant building in Manhattan.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Our next speaker is Andrea Composto.

She's not here.

Matthew Pepe, to be followed by Justin Davidson.

MR. PEPE: My name is Matthew Pepe. I'm a resident of Rockland County for my entire life. I work in Westchester. I have crossed the Tappan Zee Bridge five times a week or more for the past almost 15 years.

It's not every day that something gets on the radar of the President of the United
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States. President Obama himself has fast tracked this project. He sees the importance of it. Mayor Cuomo is on board. He also sees the importance of this project.

The federal government has pledged about two billion towards this project. I think it would be a shame not to accept that in the end. It would also be a shame to the tens of thousands of workers whose jobs would be created from this project, many of whom we saw here today in the back of the room, outside in the hall. You know in an age where there's 20 to 30 percent unemployment in the unions, I'm sure they'll tell you how important jobs are.

It's a simple fact that this bridge was built in the 1950s in an era of material shortages, built with soft steel. It's already seven years past its lifespan. I think Michael Anderson said before, there's estimates of one and-a-half billion dollars to maintain an already obsolete bridge over the next decade. I don't see the point to keep throwing good money after bad.
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This bridge needs to be built now. Everything is in line. We need to keep the ball rolling. Any obstruction to this process I believe is a disservice to the people of the region, to the commerce of this region.

Selfishly, I have a six month old. I think it's equally important to the youth of this region. He's got a while until he gets a license and he's driving over the bridge himself, but I'm sure over the next 16 years he'll be taking many trips with me across that bridge. I think it's important that we make sure that bridge is safe, and the way to do that is to build a new Tappan Zee Bridge now. We can't afford to wait.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you.

The next speaker is Justin Davidson, to be followed by Phillip Musegaas.

MR. DAVIDSON: Good evening. I'm Justin Davidson on behalf of the Pace Environmental Litigation Clinic.

First, I just wanted to say that we
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will you be submitting full, salient written comments on the DEIS. But I first wanted to discuss a couple of quick legal and procedural problems that we see in the DEIS. First, the 45 days that the public has been given to comment on this does a disservice to a project that has been in the works for over a decade now. We have filed FOIL, Freedom of Information Law, requests that we think are critical to our meaningful review and assessment of the environmental and ecological impacts of the project. And we have been given no time to review these. We have been told that they will be given back to us after the deadline for the comments period. And our 60 day extension has been completely ignored.

Second, the DEIS suffers from many fundamental legal and procedural flaws that must be addressed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

It does not adequately take a hard look at all the reasonable alternatives and quickly eliminates without sufficient
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justification other feasible options, like a large diameter tunnel, which is not discussed at all, a single structure, and the rehabilitation options.

They do this by citing to data from the previous I-287 corridor project which was not subject to a public comment period in a DEIS or an FEIS.

Additionally, the DEIS failed to describe the basis for the cost estimates, like why a tunnel would cost $8 billion or why a rehabilitation option would cost a billion dollars more than a replacement option.

The DEIS falsely assumes that the replacement alternative will not generate additional volume or capacity. There's no basis for this. They use this assumption to short circuit or avoid studying the other critical impacts on transportation, air, and energy impacts. Reasonably, whenever there's a breakdown on the current bridge, a new bridge will lead to more capacity in that regard.
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Next, the DEIS fails to properly study the impacts of constructing a new bridge and demolishing the old one on the Hudson River ecology and the ecosystem, specifically the effect on the endangered species of the Atlantic sturgeon and the shortnose sturgeon, and how harmful the effects of pile driving and dredging activities will be.

The DEIS also ignores the scenic and esthetic value of the region. The new bridge will essentially be a super highway over the Hudson River.

And you asked for some feedback about the difference between the arch and cable options. Cable option is particularly horrendous. It would provide for four fifty story towers in the middle of the Hudson. That's basically four buildings half the size of the Eiffel Tower, which I think would be quite an eyesore on the scenic beauty of the region.

Almost done.

Of course, we've heard all about the
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mass transit so I won't belabor that.

And then, lastly, the lead agencies are
segmenting the environmental review process
on key items like mass transit, future
improvements to the adjacent highway
segments, the bridge demolition, and the
environmental reviews necessary for the
different dredging processes. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Our next
speaker. Phillip Musegaas, I hope I've
pronounced that correctly, and followed by
Klaus Jacob.

MR. MUSEGAAS: My name is Phillip
Musegaas. I'm here representing
Riverkeeper. And you made a valiant effort,
so no problem.

I just want to make a brief comment. I
want to support the comments made by Pace
Environmental Litigation Clinic. We support
all of those, and also the comments made by
the Tri-State Transportation Commission
regarding the need for a mass transit option
on this bridge. If you don't put mass
transit on this bridge, you're essentially
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building an obsolete bridge from day one.

I want to start off my comments by -- my colleague here is going to show you what this DEIS actually looks like in reality. It's over a thousand pages. You've given the public 45 days to read two six-inch binders full of material, most of which is written in engineering-speak and enviro-speak, which I've learned to read after a few years, but a lot of people can't read. And that is simply not sufficient. Forty-five days is not sufficient amount of time for the public --

MR. BLOCH: I would appreciate it if you could hold the applause so we could get through and let the speakers speak.

MR. MUSEGAAS: I'll be quick. I have a short statement.

And so Riverkeeper has filed a request with the DOT, with Mike Anderson for an additional 60-day comment period so that we in the public have time to get additional information on this project to be able to review the project.
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We also have outstanding information requests from the government which are valid and reasonable requests for good information that will inform the public. And we need to have that extra time. That extra 60 days will not doom this project, it will not delay it unjustifiably. And so we repeat the request for additional time to comment.

I'm just going to make four quick points and then I'll wrap up.

This DEIS has failed to answer the following fundamental questions that need to be answered in order for the public to have the right information about whether this project should go forward.

First, has DOT fully considered and explained to the public all reasonable alternatives, such as rehabbing the old bridge, building a tunnel under the Hudson, or building a bridge with mass transit? No, it has not.

Second, has DOT completely assessed the environmental impacts to the Hudson River ecosystem and endangered species, like the
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Atlantic sturgeon, which was just listed under federal law as an endangered species a little less than a month ago? It has not.

A couple of examples: Under federal law, if a species is listed as endangered there has to be a consultation process with federal agencies to see what the impacts are and to do a complete biological assessment. That has not been done. This has to be done and the information that's taken from that assessment has to be fed into this DEIS process. That will not happen in time with this accelerated schedule that the State of New York and the Department of Transportation are basically pushing down everyone's throats that live in this region.

Second, segmentation. This project and the Army Corps of Engineers' permit proposes to segment the dredging impacts into two sections. The current permit talks about the dredging impacts caused by dredging a channel across the Hudson River, removing millions of cubic yards of sediment that's potentially contaminated just to get the
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construction equipment in to build a new bridge. That's one part. And theoretically, that will be looked at under the Army Corps permit and in this DEIS. We don't think it's been looked at. But they've put off the demolition of the bridge and the dredging that will have to happen after that into a separate permit process and a separate environmental review process. That does not comply with federal law and that does not comply with the spirit of the law or the letter of the law and that should not pass.

A couple of other quick points. A third question, how will the bridge be paid for? I think this point has been raised repeatedly. I'm not going to elaborate on that. I think the question is out there. There is no concrete plan for funding this bridge. Governor Cuomo has indicated he thinks the bridge should be built or should be funded based on tolls. That is an unacceptable economic burden to be put on local people that live in this area and work
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in this area. People that commute across that bridge should not have to pay $15 tolls.

And, finally, has the DOT proposed a final complete design for a bridge for public comment? No, they have not. They have proposed two theoretical designs that are not final, that are not proposed, there are no bids on those designs, and they have acknowledged that these may not even be the final designs.

The actual builders that are putting in bids for these projects -- and we've heard serious concerns about the quality of the work that's been done on the 287 corridor and the financial planning that's gone into that.

You know, there's two theoretical projects. There's no explanation of how one project will be picked over another. There's no criteria for choosing one of these bridges over the other. They have significantly different environmental impacts in the river, significantly
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different visual impacts on the Hudson Valley.

And so these things have not been taken into account. These are just a sampling of the numerous violations in this DEIS.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. We have a few more speakers and then we will take a short break.

Klaus Jacob? Is he here? No.

John Lipscomb? Is he here? Yes. He's to be followed by Tom Leavey.

MR. LIPSCOMB: Good evening. My name is John Lipscomb. I live in Piermont, grew up in Tarrytown, Irvington, lived in Nyack.

I currently work for Riverkeeper. I operate our patrol boat. This is my 12th season. Before that, I operated a boatyard in Upper Nyack. So my life has been on this river, earning my living on this river. I'll save my environmental comments for Thursday or another time.

I want to suggest something, however, for Thursday. Obviously, you've
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underestimated the interest in the communities on this issue. We hope that you'll restructure the schedule for Thursday. Perhaps it would pay to have the elected officials go after the members of the public so the elected officials can actually hear what the people who vote for them are saying. And the press will also be staying if the electeds go later. Please consider it because this structure is flawed.

I'd like to make my comments actually to the working men who are here and their representatives. I work for Riverkeeper. I run a patrol boat. Right now, we're replanking the bottom. We'll be launching in a couple of weeks. The vessel is commercial, federally documented. So my boat operation is no different than a tugboat operator, than a service vessel that's going to be tending the equipment that works on the bridge.

And I just want you all to know, all the working men, the trade men, the union
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men, I want you to know that the people who live in these communities who are asking for more time and who are asking for smart planning are not anti job. We are not anti job. We all recognize that an improved crossing is needed now. We all understand that there's a window of opportunity now. We all know that a rehabilitated bridge makes jobs. We all know that a tunnel makes jobs. We all know that bus rapid transit makes jobs. We would like these agency guys to tell us which of those options actually creates the most jobs, and then you guys will have something to put your weight behind.

But none of the people in these communities is saying, do nothing. They're saying, let's do something smart that 100 years from now will still be smart and not stupid from day one. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Our next speaker is Tom Leavey. Tom Leavey, is he here? No. Bob Wolff, to be followed by Bruce Levin.

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MR. WOLFF: Folks, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Bob Wolff. I'm the longest running broadcaster in history. And I work now for News 12 but I'm not speaking for News 12 because as a broadcaster, they want us to be completely impartial. So I'm speaking only as a victim.

I live in South Nyack. Every morning I look out of my window at Salisbury Point to see the traffic. And I know one thing, that I commute to Long Island to do shows for CableVision. The problem going to Long Island, one car can stall on the Long Island Expressway and it will take two hours more to get to my work in the TV station than anything that happens across the Tappan Zee Bridge. I mean, we have it pretty good. The only heavy traffic is in the morning in rush hour and at night. The rest of the time, it's a very peaceful bridge to go over.

As I look at all of you, I've heard some terrific comments and, believe me, I'm
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well aware of age. I'm 91 years old, so
I've been around doing these shows for a
long time.
I've gotten old and the bridge got old.
So there's no -- nothing wrong about saying,
what are we going to do to fix the bridge.
And the people up here have done a great job
with giving us a plan. The only thing we
have not heard -- we've heard about the
politicians, we've heard about the plans,
but what we have not heard is the effect on
the people. People come last. More jobs,
more this, bigger bridges, more of this. A
hundred years in the future they'll say
we're great. It's the people.
I've lived to 91 years old because I've
depended a lot on doctors that keep pumping
me up and sending me back for more, and I
love what I'm doing.
But I do know that being right there
where we are, 127 apartments, I guess it's
something like 200 people, we have over five
years of drilling to look forward to, five
years of air pollution, five years of soil

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pollution, five years of lights being on maybe day and night, five years of noise, and the most unhealthy living one can have.

It's very doubtful that five years from now I'll be able to stand up here and tell you, let's think a little bit about the people as well, because I live here but I would hope I don't die here before the days I want to die.

It's going to be a very unhealthy situation and nobody is giving any consideration to what should be taken care of for the health of the people who will be contaminated by all the stuff going on and the fumes and everything else. I don't have the solution, but I think it's something that should be thought of in advance, what can be done to do something to ameliorate what will be a difficult situation.

Obviously, something has to be done about a new bridge. But, obviously, the way this has been shepherded through very quickly has left a lot of questions and doubts. How much will it cost? What other
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problems will take place? All things that were brought up tonight by people of skilled knowledge that have given their lives and careers also to thinking about it.

So thank you for the privilege of speaking to you, but let's think about the people as well. That's my concern. Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. We have two more speakers, Bruce Levin and then Randy Glucksman.

MR. LEVINE: It's Bruce Levine.

MR. BLOCH: Bruce Levine. I apologize.

MR. LEVINE: And another member of SAWG, which didn't get to meet last week.

Wanted to say a few things very quickly. First of all, I think you need to go forward with this bridge project rapidly. I think the window of opportunity is essential. I'm glad you're building in the future. The Governor will be judged not by the building of this bridge, the Governor will be judged by what happens after, both in planning and in the mass transit and
everything else. So I don't have worry about that.

When the Erie Canal was built, they knew that there were going to be obstacles ahead that they didn't know what was going to be involved. They had that Can Do American spirit and they built it. And you should do the same.

And I'm a strong supporter of mass transit, as everyone who's been involved in this project for I don't know how many years knows.

I do want to raise one environmental issue, which I raised at the scoping, which is climate change. I tried my best to find in this DEIS any mention of it, any mention of what would happen if sea levels rise 10 feet, 30 feet, 50 feet. What will it do to the salinity and the chemical content of this water surrounding the bridge? What tidal forces will be changed by that?

This is not rocket science. You can do a simple model. I'm sure Columbia Lamont-Doherty can do it for you very
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rapidly.

But you don't want to build a bridge that's too low. You don't want to build a bridge that doesn't have the right coating or whatever it might take or that can withstand these forces. I did not see it. Maybe I'm wrong. It's a long document. We only had a very short amount of time. But if it's not there, you should get it in there because I know what it is to build something that's obsolete pretty soon. And this is going to take how many years to build? And then you're going to be that much closer. And you have to plan for it. It's not rocket science. It's very straightforward.

And there's so many studies on what's going to happen to this. You should be able to utilize what exists now and make sure that your specs that are going to provide the jobs for the people out there, are hopefully going to protect the people in here, but those specs should also work for the commerce of the Hudson for the length of
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time that bridge is going to exist.

Thank you.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you. Our last
speaker for this part of the session is
Randy Glucksman.

MR. GLUCKSMAN: Randy Glucksman,
resident of Rockland County. I thank you
very much.

I, quite frankly, wasn't impressed with
the designs that the young fellow showed me
in the other room about how the bridge could
be made transit ready. Residents on both
sides of the Hudson have volunteered untold
numbers of hours of their own time attending
SAWG meetings, I'm also a SAWG member, and
voiced their concerns. And I can tell you,
what we look for is not a strictly highway
bridge. You could use the plans from all
the years of studies for the millions of
dollars that were spent by the consultants
and use their design.

Mr. Anderson, you showed us in
Clarkstown Town Hall last year the final
designs. Use those designs and build the
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bridge.

To construct a bridge without commuter rail and bus rapid transit is not acceptable in the year 2012 or for future generations who would use the bridge long after all of us are gone.

The replacement bridge must, I repeat, must have both transit options whether or not they are viable on day one.

We should be encouraging use of public transportation. That is good transportation. That is good public policy. Please do the right thing and listen to what the public is saying. We need a transit-ready bridge now. Make this a legacy project, something we can be proud of for the future. Thank you very much.

MR. BLOCH: Thank you.

So that is it for our speakers at this point. We need to take a very quick break so that we can just stretch our legs. So we will come back in about eight minutes and we'll go right into our presentation.

Thank you.
THE FOREGOING IS CERTIFIED to be a true and correct transcription of the original stenographic minutes to the best of my ability.

Kathleen Stala

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