

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 23, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer,

As you know, the public sector transportation entities our nation depends on are suffering significantly from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. As you continue to work diligently to develop the next COVID-19 emergency supplemental bill, we ask that you include emergency financial assistance for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey as part of a stimulus package in support of our nation's transportation infrastructure. This assistance will ensure that the Port Authority can continue to serve the more than 20 million people who live and work in the New York and New Jersey metropolitan region.

As the number of COVID-19 cases continues to rise in the United States, New York and New Jersey have been among the hardest hit. As of March 21, New York and New Jersey are reporting almost half of our country's confirmed cases, with the majority being within the New York and New Jersey metropolitan region. Within this region, the Port Authority manages the nation's busiest airport system, the East Coast's largest seaport, a vital commuter rail system, the world's most active bus terminal, and every motor vehicle crossing between New York and New Jersey. These critical facilities also support approximately one million jobs in the region.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to higher operational costs and a severe reduction in revenue for the Port Authority as non-essential businesses close, and residents heed the warnings of public health officials. The Port Authority reports that ridership of their commuter rail system has fallen over 75 percent, and passenger volume at the six airports it operates has fallen by more than half. Vehicle volume at the bridge and tunnel crossings, as well as cargo volumes at the ports, has also substantially declined. Furthermore, many of Port Authority's tenants are requesting economic relief from rents and other charges during this difficult time.

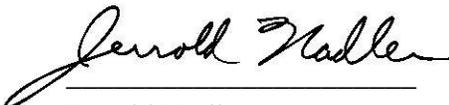
In a letter to the New York and New Jersey Congressional Delegation on March 19, the Port Authority estimated that it would require at least \$1.9 billion in federal assistance if the current level of revenue loss continues for six months. A fully operational Port Authority is indispensable for our region, as well as our nation, as we confront this crisis. As you know, the New York and New Jersey metropolitan region produces nearly 15 percent of the U.S. GDP. Without a fully functioning Port Authority, the region's recovery from this crisis, as well as that of our nation's economy, will be substantially prolonged.

While it is impossible to predict the extent and duration of this crisis, it is clear that Congress must immediately take action to support our transportation sector, including our public sector transportation entities. As you continue to work in a bipartisan fashion to confront this pandemic, we request that you include emergency financial assistance for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to ensure that it can recover from this crisis and restore its facilities.

In addition to ensuring appropriate levels of aid to counteract the agency's severe revenue losses, it is critical that any legislation be crafted in a way that ensures that the Port Authority, as a bi-state agency, is not unintentionally excluded from any of the provisions. For example, a draft of the most recent Senate legislation could be interpreted to exclude the Port Authority from the bond purchasing program by not explicitly including securities issued by bi-state entities along with those issued by states and municipalities.

We thank you for your attention to this matter, and for your work on behalf of our nation at this critical time.

Sincerely,



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

Donald Norcross
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney
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Mikie Sherrill
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Hakeem Jeffries
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Frank Pallone, Jr.
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Nydia M. Velázquez
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Peter T. King
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