

AGC SUPPORTS TOLL INCREASE – WARNS IT’S NOT ENOUGH

The Associated General Contractors, the largest statewide highway construction organization in New York State, endorsed the Thruway Authority’s plan to increase tolls by 25% while cautioning that more revenue is needed.

“Our aging Thruway system is in dire need of substantial capital construction to ease congestion, relieve toll barrier chokepoints and provide a safe and efficient superhighway that fosters economic growth,” said President & CEO AJ Castelbuono.

“However, a 25% increase won’t be sufficient to address the billion dollar backlog of maintenance and capital projects as well as potentially adding additional lanes in highly congested areas like Albany, Buffalo and Syracuse. We need more,” warned Castelbuono.

Since the last toll increase in 1988, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in New York has increased by over 64%. In fact, our toll rates are among the least expensive in the Northeast and throughout the country. Tolls are the most efficient way to generate revenue because only those who use the roads and bridges pay for them.

“This is a user fee that will be directly invested back into the infrastructure without a penny of state funds. We need to avoid expensive borrowing that masks the financial situation and turn to a pay-as-you-go system. No more gimmicks,” Castelbuono said.

“The Thruway helped build New York into the ‘Empire State.’ But years of under-investing in our state’s biggest asset has left us with a crumbling infrastructure that pales in comparison to the levels that New Yorkers have experienced and expect,” he continued.

“I commend Executive Director Michael Fleischer for his courage and leadership in recognizing the necessity of a toll increase. I call on the Board to approve this plan and once again make the Thruway the envy of its neighbors,” concluded Castelbuono.

Founded in 1926, the New York State Chapter, Inc., Associated General Contractors is the largest statewide highway construction organization in New York.