



**Testimony on ARC Tunnel, Transit
Assembly Transportation, Public Works and
Independent Authorities**

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Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding the ARC tunnel. My name is Jay Corbalis. I am a policy analyst with New Jersey Future, a smart-growth policy and advocacy organization based in Trenton. As supporters of smart growth in the state, New Jersey Future has long been in favor of the ARC tunnel. Not only will the project help ease congestion and allow for future expansion of New Jersey's rail network, it will promote the kind of sustainable, transit-oriented development that will help grow the economy while revitalizing the state's all-ready developed and urban areas. For that reason, we were disappointed to hear that the project had been delayed, and urge NJ Transit, the Governor and the Legislature to ensure that the project continues without further delay. While reviewing costs to ensure accurate projections is prudent, indefinite delay is not. The current alignment and financing of the project is the result of years of study and negotiation, and represents the largest single commitment to a transit project by the federal government. Forfeiting that money, as well as the \$3 billion committed to the project by the Port Authority, by delaying or canceling the project, would be a monumental missed opportunity, one that residents will feel and regret for decades to come.

As mentioned, the impact of not building the ARC tunnel would go beyond transportation. Land-use patterns in New Jersey have been changing in recent years, away from low-density, auto-dependant development and towards compact, mixed-use development and redevelopment focused around transit. The evidence of this shift can be seen in places like Hoboken, New Brunswick and Newark, all of which have seen a resurgence in the past decade thanks to transit-oriented development. The State, with programs like the Urban Transit Hub Tax Credit and the Transit Villages program, has played a role in encouraging this shift as well. This new development paradigm, which allows growth to be accommodated sustainably, while revitalizing our urban areas and lessening pressure on our dwindling open spaces, is undoubtedly good for New Jersey. But for this trend to continue, transit service must keep pace with the growing demand, which will require added capacity to New York City, capacity which the ARC tunnel would provide.

New Jersey's transportation system as a whole, and the ARC tunnel in particular, are critical to the state's economy and quality of life. While we understand the challenge presented by the State's current fiscal situation, we should not let short-term austerity compromise New Jersey's long term ability to grow its economy, which is exactly what will happen if we fail to adequately fund the ARC tunnel.

Thank you.