

Tri-State Transportation Campaign
2011 NJ Legislature Candidate
Survey on Transportation and Land Use Policy

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Transportation Funding:

1. Funding for transportation needs in NJ can be met if we do the following: all existing monies raised for transportation in this State (taxes, excise taxes, fees, penalties, tolls, et al) are committed only to transportation (not general fund or other politically convenient purposes), as well as outside the State (FHWA, Port Authority, Highway Authority, et al), and all money currently existing in various funds be both committed and used (not sitting and waiting for the inevitable not to happen).
2. I would like to say I support increased funding for transportation, but I feel compelled to require that we do a complete audit of existing funding before we pursue an increase. Nooks and crannies in the budget that develop over a long period of time can hide sizeable amounts of money. Then, post audit, if there is a need then I will pursue an increase in funding.
3. Local Aid to municipalities is life's blood to our transportation infrastructure. It needs to be fully funded, and after doing #2. above, the adequacy of funding could be determined and the same course followed.

Roads and Bridges:

I would work with the Assembly Transportation Committee to assure the NJDOT and all political subdivisions were adhering to the current requirements, that all funding for "fix-it-first" were committed to only that purpose and expended on an as-needed basis (not on a politically friendly basis), and work on remedial legislation if necessary.

NJ Transit:

1. I occasionally ride trains into NYC; it's cheaper than the tolls through the tunnels.
2. We need to rethink public transportation. The existing infrastructure is a great foundation, but it is aging and needs help. Besides upgrading in technology for efficiency and effectiveness, we need to rethink our systems and understand that sometimes "manpower" is needed, not technology. An example: use passenger vans for some routes (both urban and suburban) that service smaller but demanding populations; the behemoth bus has limited, not universal, use. Another example: where demand for parking at NJ Transit stations is great convert surface parking to garages that provide more parking and maybe free up some acreage for green use.

3. Current level of public transportation is not adequate and not as effective as it should be. The frequency/number of trains for each line should be increased, with the number of cars be adjusted for the time of day as volume dictates. Bus lines should also change so that large buses handle large volume, smaller buses as required, and passenger vans added as feeder lines where demand exists.
4. Improvements to the trans-Hudson commute are absolutely necessary and I agree with Governor Christie's action. That tunnel was ill prepared and rushed through for political purposes only. Piggy backing with the Amtrak tunnel is the better solution for all parties involved.

Traffic Safety:

1. Traffic safety measures are only adequate if they are adhered to by all participants. Pedestrians jaywalking or walking on the wrong side of the street are not in compliance. Bike riders who would rather be "dead right" rather than safe don't help. A good education program starting in the first grade would be a step in the right direction.
2. I regularly walk in the City of Trenton. I grew up in NYC where walking is a way of life and survival requires vigilance and common sense.

Sustainable Communities:

1. Smart growth? Is everybody on the same page in defining "smart growth"? There is no more COAH, but the concept of affordable housing, as required by court order and law, in the middle of a cornfield is not "smart growth." I am inclined to pursue my concept of smart growth, but we need to all agree to what it means, what it is, and what its impact is as we move forward. Our space is limited, our needs are great, our resources are meager and shrinking, and so we do need to be "smart" in our approach to everything demanded of our government.
2. Do we need to continue to fund the Transit Village program? It is a case by case issue and I don't support programs that get established then have to perpetuate and justify their existence after the original need has been met. Is there a commercial solution that provides for this through a developer? As we keep using the government to provide these solutions the commercial initiative atrophies.

Above & Beyond:

I grew up in NYC and am a firm believer in public transportation, but it needs to meet the needs of the populace. I believe in the viability of urban, suburban, and rural joyfully co-existing. I believe in a concept of "smart growth" that is constructive, non-intrusive, and includes common sense in its approach.

Oh, my working for twenty years at NJDOT helps me to understand some of these specific issues.