

**GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
May 16, 2022**

Public Comments for May 16, 2022 Board Meeting

*The public was encouraged to submit public comments via the comment form on
www.GatewayProgram.org.*

*Comments were distributed to the Board, posted on the GDC website, and recorded in the public
record.*

Name	Carlo Scissura
Organization	NY Building Congress
Comment Topic	Project Start
<p>The New York Building Congress is emphatic in its support for the Gateway Program, which remains the most critical infrastructure project in the United States. We are thrilled that the program is set to receive federal funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and we cannot stress enough the importance of getting the necessary funding released as soon as possible so that we can act quickly to begin work on this project.</p> <p>There is no time to wait on the Gateway Program and we urge the GDC Board of Directors to confirm Kris Kolluri as its Chief Executive Officer and move forward so that we can put shovels in the ground and improve the lives of millions of commuters along the Northeast Corridor (NEC).</p> <p>The Gateway Program will work in concert with New York State’s investments in and around Penn Station to create a world-class transportation rail hub and an expanded central business district in New York City. While the COVID-19 pandemic shut down most offices for more than a year, companies are beginning to resume in person work and will no doubt begin to see an increase in ridership levels in our transit systems, including the NEC.</p> <p>This major investment will be a cornerstone piece of 21st Century infrastructure that will be crucial to a corridor which contributes to 20 percent of our nation’s GDP, over \$3 Trillion in annual economic output, and serves 17 percent of the U.S. population. Economic engines served by the NEC include 32 percent of Fortune 500 Company headquarters, 30 percent of the nation’s 4-year colleges and universities, and 20% of U.S. jobs.</p> <p>Investing in the Gateway Program can pave the way for our country’s economic success, for the benefit of Americans today and generations to come, and we must act now.</p>	

Name	Bruce Bergen
Organization	Raritan Valley Rail Coalition
Comment Topic	Gateway Tunnel project
<p>I appear today as the Chairman of the Raritan Valley Rail Coalition, a group encompassing 4 counties and dozens of municipalities in New Jersey, served by the Raritan Valley Line of New Jersey Transit. Very simply, the thousands of commuters and residents of New Jersey, who travel to Manhattan on a regular basis, both for work and for recreation, will not receive full and adequate service until the Gateway Project, will all of its parts, is complete. Our group has worked for many years to expand direct service to New York Penn Station for our riders, which will have both a positive effect economically as well as upon the quality of life of those using the rails. On the other had, as has been said by many, for many years, the closure of one of the two existing tunnels prior to the completion of the new tunnels will have a devastating effect upon New Jersey, the north east and in fact, the entire United States. I once again want to thank the elected officials in both New York and New Jersey, and all of the groups supporting this project, as well as the GDC, for all of their work to make this project a reality. The Raritan Valley Rail coalition continues to strongly support all efforts to complete this project at the soonest possible date. Thank you for the opportunity to address you.</p>	

Name	Lauren Colacurcio
Organization	Association for a Better New York
Comment Topic	Supportive comment on the progress of the Gateway Program
<p>The Association for a Better New York (ABNY) is pleased to see the Gateway Program moving forward with the nomination of Kris Kolluri as the Chief Executive Officer to the Gateway Development Commission. This project addresses the most pressing infrastructure need in the country, and with access to unprecedented levels of funding from the federal government, the time to act is now. We look forward to working with our partners in the Build Gateway Now Coalition to ensure this project progresses to safeguard the economic future of New York and the entire Northeast region of the United States. This is a real opportunity to improve the quality of life for everyday New Yorkers, commuters, tourists, and visitors, and we hope this positive momentum carries forward.</p>	

Name	Felicia Park-Rogers
Organization	Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Comment Topic	Supportive comment on the progress of the Gateway Program
<p>The Gateway Program is our nation’s most urgent infrastructure project. It will deliver a series of critically important projects that will fix one of the busiest and most fragile segments of the Northeast Corridor, which connects 20% of our nation’s GDP. Of most significant priority, building a new rail tunnel under the Hudson River, and rehabilitating the existing tunnels, must be done proactively, instead of waiting for the next big infrastructure failure.</p> <p>The Gateway Program is necessary for expanding trans-Hudson capacity to meet the needs of commuters for a post-COVID recovery and to meet the expanding capacity needs for the next fifty years.</p> <p>The proposed \$13 billion Gateway tunnels are the centerpiece of Amtrak’s \$30 billion capital program to modernize the Northeast Corridor and the NEC 35 plan. With the support of both the Governors of NY and NJ and the Biden administration, the plan is finally on track to move forward after years of political gaming has mired the project in delays.</p> <p>The Gateway tunnels will double rail capacity and create hundreds of thousands of jobs, while reducing transportation-related carbon emissions by more than 180,000 tons every year. Should one of the existing tunnels fail before the new set is complete, roughly 72,000 commuters will be stranded, many of whom may opt to drive, further exacerbating congestion and air pollution.</p> <p>It is exceptionally clear that these tunnels are a linchpin to the success of the regional and national economies. The northeast corridor megaregion produces \$3 trillion in economic output, comprising a full 20 percent of the national GDP. Amtrak’s ability to run trains without unnecessary delays is key to economic growth and meeting the region’s transit needs. The existing tunnels must be repaired and expanded; they are already dramatically over-taxed and at risk of failure. Further delays on this project could jeopardize our region’s economic rebound as well as the willingness of commuters to return to New York City.</p> <p>Tri-State Transportation Campaign cannot more strongly support moving to the next phase of development of the Gateway Project.</p>	