

May 7, 2018

The Honorable Philip Murphy  
State of New Jersey  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 001  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Dear Governor Murphy:

As the Borough President of Staten Island, New York, I am writing to ask for your support in a matter of critical importance to thousands of interstate commuters using the Goethals Bridge on weekends. In particular, I am referring to massive traffic jams experienced by motorists exiting the New Jersey Turnpike (NJTP) at Exit 13, in order to travel over the Goethals Bridge into Staten Island and on to points east.

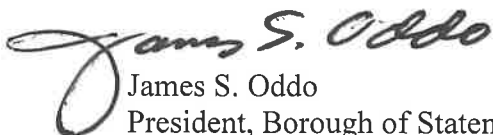
I am requesting that we begin a dialogue so that we might identify and effectuate traffic mitigation measures in the Exit 13 toll plaza for both the short and long term. As a most immediate measure, perhaps employing local traffic agents might help to direct a smoother and more efficient merger process. In the longer term, a re-configuration of the plaza and the bridge ramps might be in order. As elected officials, we owe it to our constituents to provide them the best possible quality of life, and spending hours in traffic when home might be less than a dozen miles away certainly detracts from our ability to fulfill that mandate.

Horror stories abound about delays that are measured not in minutes, but in hours. And while I am aware that when the second span is fully constructed there will be additional bridge lane capacity, it does not change the fact that Exit 13 traffic is forced to deal with a severe choke point; motorists may pay the NJTP toll at any one of a dozen toll lanes in the plaza, but are forced to merge into the two far left lanes if they wish to cross the bridge.

Let me be perfectly clear: this is not a parochial issue for me. It not only affects Staten Islanders, but it also negatively impacts residents of the Garden State who are becoming stuck in this logjam on an all-too-frequent basis.

I believe the time for a study of the Exit 13 toll plaza and Goethals Bridge entry ramps is now. I hope that you agree with me, and I would be happy to discuss the issue at any time or place of your choosing. Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

  
James S. Oddo

President, Borough of Staten Island

