

Rothman Urges Key Panel to Fund New Jersey's Transportation Priorities

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Washington, DC -- Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) today made his first appearance before an Appropriations panel as a member of the committee to support New Jersey's transportation priorities. Rothman joined a bipartisan coalition of the New Jersey delegation to urge the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee to continue funding for the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR) and the Newark-Elizabeth Rail Link (NERL).

"New Jersey has turned to light rail networks as the key to relieving congestion on our state's overburdened roads," Rothman said. "The crown jewel of this effort is the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail, which will be the lynchpin of transportation in Northern New Jersey, by integrating commuter rail, ferry, and subway services to ease congestion on our roads." Rothman requested appropriations in Fiscal Year 2002 of approximately \$150 million to complete the first segment of the HBLR and \$20 million to design and begin construction on the first mile of the NERL. He pointed out the need for transportation alternatives on New Jersey's congested and overused roads.

"New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation, with 8 million residents and more than 1,066 people per square mile," Rothman said. "And sometimes it feels like all 8 million are on the road at the same time."

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