

# SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 80

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY

### 218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 31, 2018

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator JOSEPH A. LAGANA**

**District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**Senator LORETTA WEINBERG**

**District 37 (Bergen)**

**Assemblywoman PATRICIA EGAN JONES**

**District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)**

**Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON**

**District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)**

**Assemblyman NICHOLAS CHIARAVALLOTI**

**District 31 (Hudson)**

**Assemblywoman BETTYLOU DECROCE**

**District 26 (Essex, Morris and Passaic)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

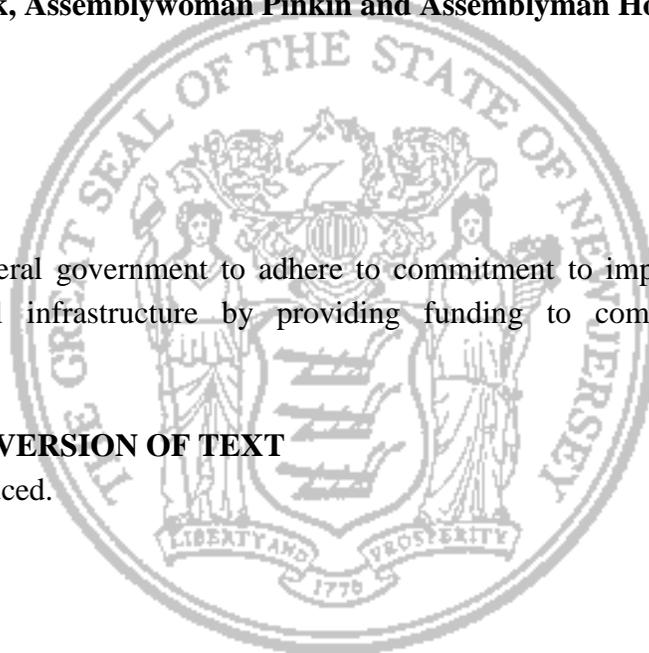
**Senators Ruiz, Singleton, Assemblywoman Quijano, Assemblymen DeAngelo, Mukherji, Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttle, Assemblyman Karabinchak, Assemblywoman Pinkin and Assemblyman Houghtaling**

**SYNOPSIS**

Urges federal government to adhere to commitment to improve Northeast Corridor rail infrastructure by providing funding to complete Gateway Program.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/14/2020)

1   **A JOINT RESOLUTION** urging the federal government to adhere to  
2   its commitment to improve Northeast Corridor rail infrastructure  
3   by providing half of the funding to complete the Gateway  
4   Program.  
5  
6   **WHEREAS**, The Northeast Corridor (NEC) is the rail backbone of the  
7   Northeast region, serving 800,000 riders and various industries on  
8   2,000 commuter, intercity, and freight trains each day; and  
9   **WHEREAS**, In the “Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of  
10   2008,” Congress improved coordination along the NEC by  
11   directing the Secretary of Transportation to establish the Northeast  
12   Corridor Commission (Commission) to promote cooperation and to  
13   advise Congress on NEC policy; and  
14   **WHEREAS**, The Commission’s work has allowed regional leadership  
15   to stabilize the NEC and to pursue future growth; and  
16   **WHEREAS**, In 2011, plans for the Gateway Program were unveiled,  
17   which sought to provide strategic rail infrastructure improvements  
18   in order to improve existing services and increase capacity for  
19   passenger trains running beneath the Hudson River; and  
20   **WHEREAS**, The Commission’s April 2018 annual report noted that,  
21   although some progress has been made along the NEC, key  
22   investments are still needed, including advancement of various  
23   components of the Gateway Program, such as Portal Bridge North  
24   and the Hudson River Tunnel project; and  
25   **WHEREAS**, That report also noted that without additional federal  
26   funding, these important repair and replacement projects cannot  
27   advance to the next stage of development and construction; and  
28   **WHEREAS**, In 2003, the existing trans-Hudson rail tunnels reached  
29   peak capacity, necessitating the commencement of plans to build  
30   additional tunnels to accommodate future growth in ridership; and  
31   **WHEREAS**, The need for additional tunnels only grew stronger when  
32   the existing tunnels incurred damage from flooding during  
33   Superstorm Sandy in 2012; and  
34   **WHEREAS**, Workers who ride and rely on the NEC contribute \$50  
35   billion annually to the United States economy; and  
36   **WHEREAS**, A loss of NEC transit service is estimated to cost the  
37   United States economy \$100 million for just a single day; and  
38   **WHEREAS**, Amtrak’s former President and CEO, Joseph Boardman,  
39   stated that the “Gateway Program is essential to ensuring safe and  
40   reliable mobility for the region's rail passengers;” and  
41   **WHEREAS**, In 2015, federal officials agreed to pay half the costs of  
42   funding the Gateway Program, including the Hudson River Tunnel  
43   project and upgrades to New Jersey rail infrastructure; and  
44   **WHEREAS**, In June 2017, state and federal authorities completed  
45   planning and environmental review for the construction of new rail  
46   tunnels between New Jersey and New York; and  
47   **WHEREAS**, The Hudson River Tunnel project must be completed prior  
48   to the closure of the existing tunnels, because a reduction from the

1 existing two tunnels to one tunnel would lead to a prohibitive 75  
2 percent reduction in the number of trans-Hudson trains during peak  
3 ridership hours; and

4 **WHEREAS**, Additional funding is required to proceed to the  
5 construction phase of the Hudson River Tunnel project, but  
6 President Trump has personally intervened to block Congress from  
7 funding this crucial domestic infrastructure project; and

8 **WHEREAS**, The federal government is obligated to meet its  
9 commitments to the State of New Jersey, the State of New York,  
10 and the passengers and industries that rely upon the seamless  
11 operation of rail lines along the Northeast Corridor; now, therefore,  
12

13 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*  
14 *State of New Jersey:*  
15

16 1. The Governor and the Legislature of New Jersey respectfully  
17 urge the United States Congress and the President of the United  
18 States to adhere to the federal government's commitment to  
19 improve the reliability of Northeast Corridor rail infrastructure by  
20 providing half of the funding required to complete the Gateway  
21 Program.  
22

23 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,  
24 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or the  
25 Secretary of the Senate to the President of the United States, the  
26 Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, the  
27 Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of  
28 Representatives, and each member of Congress from this State.  
29

30 3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.  
31  
32

33 STATEMENT  
34

35 This resolution respectfully urges the United States Congress and  
36 the President of the United States to adhere to the federal  
37 government's commitment to improve the reliability of Northeast  
38 Corridor rail infrastructure by providing half of the funding  
39 required to complete the Gateway Program.

40 The Gateway Program, which seeks to improve existing service  
41 and increase capacity for passenger trains running beneath the  
42 Hudson River, is essential to ensuring safe and reliable mobility for  
43 the Northeast Corridor's rail passengers. The Northeast Corridor is  
44 the rail backbone of the Northeast region and serves 800,000 riders  
45 and various industries on 2,000 commuter, intercity, and freight  
46 trains each day. Recognizing that current infrastructure assets  
47 crossing the Hudson River have already been pushed beyond their  
48 useful lives, federal officials agreed in 2015 to pay half of the costs

1 of funding the Gateway Program, including the Hudson River  
2 Tunnel project and upgrades to New Jersey rail infrastructure.

3 The workers who rely on Northeast Corridor transit contribute  
4 \$50 billion annually to the United States economy and it is  
5 estimated that just a one day loss of service along the corridor will  
6 result in \$100 million in economic losses to the United States. It is  
7 in the federal government's own interest to ensure the continued,  
8 long-term reliability of transit along the Northeast Corridor. The  
9 federal government is obligated to provide sufficient funding for the  
10 Gateway Program in order to meet its commitments to the State of  
11 New Jersey, the State of New York, and the passengers and  
12 industries that rely upon the seamless operation of rail lines along  
13 the Northeast Corridor.