

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 47

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ROBERT D. CLIFTON

District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)

Assemblywoman NANCY F. MUNOZ

District 21 (Morris, Somerset and Union)

Assemblywoman BETTYLOU DECROCE

District 26 (Essex, Morris and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Urges NJT to provide locations for telecommuting during repairs to New York Pennsylvania Station and construction of new trans-Hudson rail tunnel.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** urging the New Jersey Transit
2 Corporation to provide locations for telecommuting during the
3 repairs to New York Pennsylvania Station and the construction
4 of the new trans-Hudson rail tunnel.
5
6 **WHEREAS**, Built in 1910, the Hudson River rail tunnel is essential to
7 local and regional economies and the daily transportation of people
8 into and out of the City of New York and is a critical rail passenger
9 crossing between New Jersey and New York Pennsylvania Station
10 (Penn Station); and
11 **WHEREAS**, The Hudson River rail tunnel is one of the busiest sections
12 of the Northeast Corridor, which connects Washington, D.C. to
13 Boston, Massachusetts and facilitates the movement of
14 approximately 200,000 passengers per day; and
15 **WHEREAS**, The Hudson River rail tunnel's aging infrastructure and the
16 damage caused by Superstorm Sandy have severely limited the
17 years of viability that remain, which have necessitated emergency
18 tunnel repairs throughout recent years that have caused long delays
19 to the rail service provided by the New Jersey Transit Corporation
20 (New Jersey Transit); and
21 **WHEREAS**, Amtrak, which is the infrastructure manager of the
22 Northeast Corridor and owns Penn Station, estimates that the
23 Hudson River rail tunnel has approximately 10 to 20 years of
24 service left and that each of the Hudson River rail tunnel's tubes
25 will need to be shut down for more than one year to rebuild and
26 replace the tunnel's components, which will dramatically reduce
27 trans-Hudson rail capacity in the short-term by 75 percent and, as a
28 result, future service delays may become inevitable; and
29 **WHEREAS**, Recently, Amtrak has proposed the inclusion of a new
30 trans-Hudson rail tunnel, in the larger rail transportation project
31 known as the Gateway Program, which will increase rail capacity in
32 the long-term along the Northeast Corridor and accommodate
33 future rail passenger demand for both Amtrak and New Jersey
34 Transit; and
35 **WHEREAS**, If started immediately, construction of a new tunnel and
36 replacement of the existing tunnel would take at least 10 years,
37 which, given the existing tunnel's condition, could lead to delays
38 and significant schedule disruptions in New Jersey Transit rail
39 service until the project's completion; and
40 **WHEREAS**, Following two train derailments at Penn Station, Amtrak
41 announced that it will conduct a series of emergency track repairs
42 and switch renewal projects at Penn Station, in an effort to prevent
43 derailments, which will require Amtrak to close several tracks at
44 Penn Station for days or weeks at a time and reduce the capacity at
45 Penn Station; and
46 **WHEREAS**, Penn Station, which is the busiest train station in America
47 and recorded a ridership of over 10 million passengers in 2016,
48 accommodates more than 450 trains operated by New Jersey

1 Transit per day that provide commuter service to New Jersey rail
2 passengers; and
3 **WHEREAS**, The announcement of the repairs has led to New Jersey
4 Transit anticipating minimum delays of 15 minutes on weekdays
5 and 30 minutes on weekends in New Jersey Transit rail service for
6 an indefinite period of time, which may result in longer commutes
7 for many rail passengers in New Jersey; and
8 **WHEREAS**, As cities have grown and highway congestion has
9 increased, the Northeast Corridor, the Hudson River rail tunnel, and
10 Penn Station have become critical in the connection of commuter
11 rail systems, including New Jersey Transit, to the central business
12 districts within cities that impact the nation's economy; and
13 **WHEREAS**, It is critical during this period of repair and reconstruction
14 to some of the region's most important pieces of rail infrastructure
15 that New Jersey Transit provide an alternative, which should
16 consist of a telecommuting location or locations that are equipped
17 with internet access to be used as work space, for New Jersey
18 Transit rail passengers who may be unable to reach their places of
19 work due to the severe delays in rail service caused by the repairs
20 and reconstruction; and
21 **WHEREAS**, With the potential economic impact that limiting the
22 capacity of Penn Station and the Hudson River Rail tunnel will
23 have on the New Jersey and regional economies, it is in the best
24 interest of rail passengers in New Jersey and the region for this
25 House to urge New Jersey Transit to provide locations for
26 telecommuting during the repairs to Penn Station and the
27 construction of the new trans-Hudson rail tunnel; now, therefore,

28
29 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New
30 Jersey:

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32 1. This House respectfully urges the New Jersey Transit
33 Corporation to provide locations at which New Jersey Transit
34 Corporation customers may access the internet in order to
35 telecommute to work during the repairs to New York Pennsylvania
36 Station and the construction of the new trans-Hudson rail tunnel.

37
38 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
39 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the
40 Governor of the State of New Jersey, the Commissioner of the New
41 Jersey Department of Transportation, and the Executive Director of
42 the New Jersey Transit Corporation.

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45 **STATEMENT**

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47 This resolution urges the New Jersey Transit Corporation (New
48 Jersey Transit) to provide locations for telecommuting during the

1 repairs to New York Pennsylvania Station (Penn Station) and the
2 construction of the new trans-Hudson rail tunnel.
3 The Hudson River rail tunnel and Penn Station have become
4 critical in the connection of New Jersey Transit to the central
5 business districts that impact the nation's economy. Therefore, it is
6 critical during this period of repair and reconstruction to some of
7 the region's most important pieces of rail infrastructure that New
8 Jersey Transit provide an alternative, which should consist of a
9 telecommuting location or locations that are equipped with internet
10 access to be used as work space, for New Jersey Transit rail
11 passengers who may be unable to reach their places of work due to
12 the severe delays in rail service caused by the repairs and
13 reconstruction.