**Tri-State Transportation Campaign**

- **Mission:** reduce car and truck dependency; create a more sustainable transportation system.


- **Founders:** NRDC, EDF, NJPIRG, NYPIRG, Regional Plan Association, CT Fund for the Environment.
Our Region – Complex

- 21 million people in NYC metro area
- Over 2.3 billion transit trips a yr in NYC.
- Smaller cities – Newark, Trenton, White Plains, Hartford, Bridgeport
- Suburbs (Long Island) and rural areas
Tri-State Transportation Campaign

Main advocacy tools:
- Coalition building
- Research and analysis
- Legal strategies
- Media
Campaign Stories

1. Reform of NJ Dept of Transportation
2. Reform of CT Dept of Transportation
3. New York - Congestion pricing
Why reform of DOTs?

- Resource levels are high
- Where and how DOTs spend money matters
Connecticut growth trends, 1990-2005

- Population
- Nonfarm jobs
- Daily vehicle miles traveled
Goals for a 21st Century DOT

Smart investment in existing infrastructure.

Manage congestion, not chase it with new road capacity.

Provide leadership and $ to influence municipalities.
Reward interest in good planning, bike, pedestrian & local transit.
Transportation reform in NJ

1996

- TSTC analysis: nearly 50% of NJ DOT budget for new highways.
Transportation reform in NJ

1996-1999
- TSTC exerts “fix-it-first” pressure in press and in Trenton.

$250 Million Boondoggle

Bergen's Failing Bridges
2000

- Gov. Whitman and legislators mandate repair of one-half of the state’s roads and bridges over five years.
Transportation reform in NJ

2001

- TSTC and allies sue NJ DOT for failing to adhere to fix-it-first mandate. Court criticizes DOT.

Transport advocates sue state to force bridge and road repair

BY JOE MALAMONICO
STAR-LEDGER STAFF

Unable to sway officials during five months of lobbying, several watchdog groups filed a lawsuit yesterday accusing the state of reneging on its commitment to repair bridges and roads.

The activist groups say the state's proposed 2002 budget fails to address a pledge made last year to fix half of New Jersey’s deficient roads and bridges and to spend 1,000 new miles of bicycle paths over the next five years.

The lawsuit also challenges the state's decision to shift $60 million worth of tax revenues that had been earmarked for transportation into the general treasury instead, and the budget's use of $35 million of that money.

"More approved funding money to the state than was spent to repair roads and bridges," said Joe Zuber, executive director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign. "There is enough money to fix half of the bridges and build the bike lanes." (Editors' note: Zuber has since been replaced as executive director.)

The lawsuit, filed in Superior Court in Mercer County, attempts to force the state to revise its budget. But Transportation Department spokesman John Dourdan said the agency's capital budget with $1 billion in state funding provides funding for repairs to numerous roads and bridges, including several projects with big price tags.

"We've been very up-front about the challenges that confront us in attempting to repair the deficient roads and bridges," said Dourdan. "We are headed in that direction, it will take longer than they want." (Editors' note: Dourdan has since left the agency.)

At the heart of the dispute between the advocates and the state is the legislation last year that restructured the Transportation Trust Fund, the program used to pay for major capital projects.

The legislation called for fixing half of the state's deficient bridges and substandard road pavements within five years. The advocates — whose position was supported by a growing number of legislation from both parties — argue that the law established those "Fix It First" timetables as mandatory, but officials insist they were merely goals.

"We think the budget is a good one and it not only meets the spirit of the trust fund renewal, but also the law itself," Dourdan said. (Editors' note: Dourdan has since left the agency.)

The independent groups maintain that residents who approved a public question in November, which ultimately allocated $400 million worth of existing tax revenue, are not getting what they voted for. Moreover, the groups accused the state of using "back-door maneuvering" to shift $80 million in taxes dedicated to transportation.

"Nothing has been rebought and no money has been reallocated in response to the law, even though fixing bridges was made a top priority," said Marla Costanzo, executive director of the New Jersey Environmental Lobby.

In addition to the Environmental Lobby and Tri-State Campaign, others groups that joined the lawsuit are the New Jersey Public Interest Research Group Citizens' Lobby, Transportation Alternatives, and United Taxpayers of New Jersey.

Joe Malamonic covers transportation. He can be reached at jmalamonic@starledger.com or (609) 394-4288.
Transportation reform in NJ

2003-2006

- DOT cancels bypass projects works on land use approach to congestion.
2007-2009

- Slight backslide at the agency, but spending on new highway expansion hovers around 5%. Bike and ped, bridge repair spending up.
Connecticut – DOT Reform

- Summer 2007: TSTC reports released, finds 60% of highway money for road expansion.
- Fall-Winter 2007: Outreach with dozens of groups and editorial boards. ConnDOT reform commission.
- Feb 2008: Commission final report cites TSTC work.

Reform: The Road Not Taken
A Review of Projected Transportation Spending in Connecticut, 2007-2010

Tri-State Transportation Campaign
May 2007
Connecticut – DOT Reform

- Fall 2008 - Commish Marie calls for greater transit investment + TOD.
- Summer 2009 – Gov Rell signs Complete Streets legislation (TSTC drafted).
- Summer - Fall 2009 – Commish Marie calls off big highway projects like Route 11 and I-84 widening; pushes for fix-it-first and transit instead.
New York – Congestion pricing

Pre - 2006 – push for pricing, esp. after London’s program starts.

Early 2006 - opinion poll, Mayor sustainability plan.

April 2007 – PlaNYC announced, including congestion pricing.
New York – Congestion pricing

April 2007 – Campaign for NY Future coalition formed, 100+ groups.

2006- 2007 – intense debate and advocacy: leafletting, mtgs with electeds, media outreach, green shirts.
New York – Congestion pricing

March 31, 2008
City Council passes plan!
April 2008: New York State Legislature fails to vote on plan.
New York – Congestion pricing

Failure? NYC DOT still revolutionizing streets of NYC.
New York – Congestion pricing

Failure?

Debate over transit issues that resulted from congestion pricing helped set the stage for Legislature to approve a $2 billion dollar package for MTA transit system in 2009. . . .

CAMPAIGN CONTINUES! Congestion pricing is one of transit financing options that may be considered.
1. Campaign Lessons – The End?

- “It’s not over until the fat conductor sings,” Gene Russianoff, Straphangers Campaign/NYPIRG, NYC.

- May lose a battle but might be winning the war.
2. Campaign Lessons — Planning Vs. Doing

Identify clear goals and how to deal with potential problems, but don’t overplan.

Remain flexible and nimble.
3. Campaign Lessons – Smart Coalitions

- Bigger is not necessarily better
- Get the builders on your side
- One coordinator
- Inside, outside game
4. Campaign Lessons – Know the Role of the Advocate

- Explain the problem
- Be a resource
- Build support
- Exert pressure
- Stay above the fray
- Hold electeds accountable
5. Campaign Lessons – Be Aggressive

But don’t sound crazy!
6. Campaign Lessons – Be Creative
Broadcast a clear, urgent message that makes people care.
8. Campaign lessons – Use all your tools

- Media, legal, research, advocacy.
Learn More – Join Our Network!

Kate Slevin
Tri-State Transportation Campaign
blog.tstc.org
tstc.org