



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 17, 2021

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The Raritan Valley Line Mayors' Alliance cheered great news out of Washington yesterday regarding the Gateway new Hudson River tunnel project. The Biden Administration reversed a policy by former President Donald Trump that did not allow either New York or New Jersey to use loans borrowed from the federal government for the project as part of each state's funding commitment to the project.

This artificial obstacle prevented New Jersey and New York from using federal loan funds – which each state would have to pay back -- as their 50% share of Gateway costs.

"We are relieved that the Biden Administration removed this irrational policy and are optimistic that the Gateway Project will move forward with great speed under the Biden Administration," said Bound Brook Mayor Bob Fazen. "Although, to be sure, there is still a lot of work to be done, we believe the project will move forward with great speed now."

"We are particularly thankful for the leadership of Congressman Tom Malinowski, who pressed the new Administration on this change," said Westfield Mayor Shelley Brindle. "Congressman Malinowski, along with Senators Booker and Menendez, continue to advocate that the Gateway project is the most important infrastructure project in the United States."

Gateway's planned new tunnels under the Hudson River is critical to achieving expanded one-seat ride service on New Jersey Transit's Raritan Valley line. President Biden's pick for US Department of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg, has vowed to move forward with Gateway. "It seems particularly appropriate that Secretary Buttigieg, himself a former mayor, would recognize the importance of Gateway to improve the lives of countless New Jersey and New York residents. It's time to put the last four years' worth of delays behind us and move forward quickly on this clearly-needed project," Mayor Colleen Mahr commented.

The Raritan Valley Line Mayors' Alliance is a bi-partisan group of 32 Mayors from Union, Somerset, Hunterdon and Middlesex Counties advocating for fair and equitable service for more than 23,000 users of the RVL. The Alliance, organized in 2018 by Mayors Brindle, Mahr and Fazen (and joined now in their leadership by Cranford Mayor Kathleen Prunty), are working with federal and State elected and appointed officials to gain support for midtown direct service/one-seat ride during weekday peak hours and weekends. Despite ridership equal to or greater than some other New Jersey Transit rail lines with peak hour midtown direct trains, RVL has none.

"The 32 mayors serving towns along the Raritan Valley Line will continue to fight hard for a better commute for their residents. We will not rest until we have achieved that goal," added Mayor Prunty.