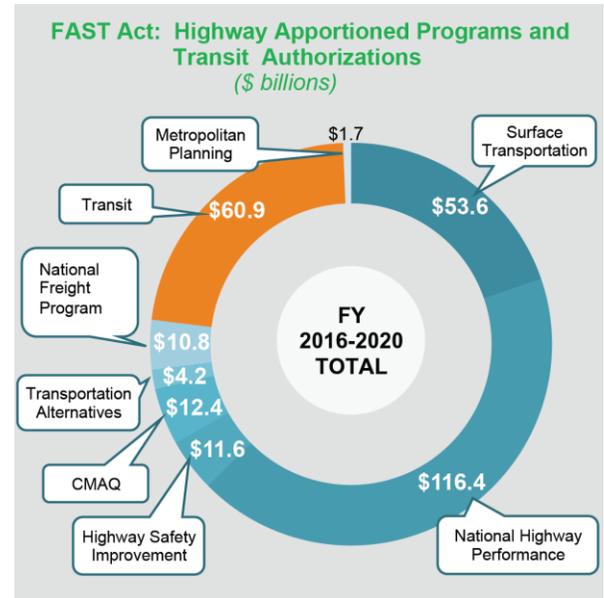


## The FAST Act

On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (Pub. L. No. 114-94) into law—the first federal law in over a decade to provide long-term funding certainty for surface transportation infrastructure planning and investment. The FAST Act authorizes \$305 billion over fiscal years 2016 through 2020 for highway, highway and motor vehicle safety, public transportation, motor carrier safety, hazardous materials safety, rail, and research, technology, and statistics programs. The FAST Act maintains the Department of Transportation's (DOT) focus on safety, keeps intact the established structure of the various highway-related programs they manage, continues efforts to streamline project delivery and, for the first time, provides a dedicated source of federal dollars for freight projects. With the enactment of the FAST Act, states and local governments are now moving forward with critical transportation projects with the confidence that they will have a federal partner over the long term. The FAST Act builds on the changes made by MAP-21. Setting the course for transportation investment in highways, the FAST Act—



**Improves mobility on America's highways:** The FAST Act establishes and funds new programs to support critical transportation projects to ease congestion and facilitate the movement of freight on the Interstate System and other major roads. Examples include developing a new National Multimodal Freight Policy, and apportioning funding through a new National Highway Freight Program

**Creates jobs and supports economic growth:** The FAST Act authorizes \$226.3 billion in Federal funding for FY 2016 through 2020 for road, bridge, bicycling, and walking improvements. In addition, the FAST Act includes a number of provisions designed to improve freight movement in support of national goals.

**Accelerates project delivery and promotes innovation:** Building on the reforms of MAP-21 and FHWA's Every Day Counts initiative, the FAST Act incorporates changes aimed at ensuring the timely delivery of transportation projects. These changes will improve innovation and efficiency in the development of projects, through the planning and environmental review process, to project delivery.

**NJ SEED lauds congress on passing the FAST Act and establishing a long-term transportation funding system. NJ SEED commends both parties for their efforts in reforming and funding the United States federal transportation spending. FAST Act stands as a momentous piece of legislation that provides essential progress, helping to establish the need for transportation funding as a legitimate and meaningful priority. However, more needs to be done to fund transportation as the status quo doesn't reflect the reality of inflation, decaying infrastructure and increased commutes and ridership.**

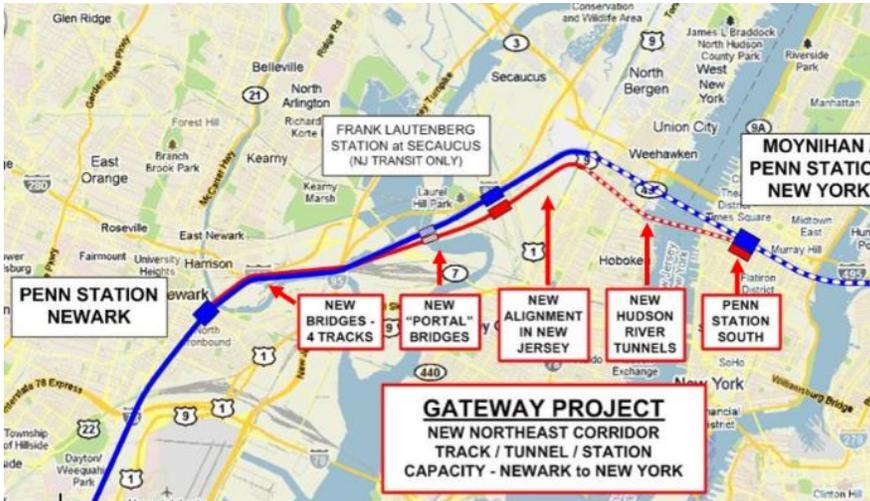
### Gateway Program: Increased Rail Capacity and a Solid Rail Infrastructure

The Gateway Program is a proposed set of strategic rail infrastructure improvements designed to improve current services and create new capacity that will allow the doubling of passenger trains running under the Hudson River. The program will increase track, tunnel, bridge, and station capacity, eventually creating four mainline tracks between Newark, NJ, and Penn Station, New York, including a new, two-track Hudson River tunnel.

The program also includes updates to, and modernization of, existing infrastructure, such as the electrical system that supplies power to the roughly 450 weekday trains using this segment of the Northeast Corridor, and rebuilding and replacing the damaged components of the existing, century-old Hudson River tunnel, which was inundated with sea water during Super Storm Sandy. By eliminating the bottleneck in New York and

creating additional tunnel, track, and station capacity in the most congested segment of the NEC, the Gateway Program will provide greater levels of service, increased redundancy, added reliability for shared operations, and additional capacity for the future increases in commuter and intercity rail service.

The Gateway Program is still in the planning and design phase and a reliable program cost estimate has not yet been developed. Amtrak has directed more than \$300 million, mostly from federal sources, to the Gateway Program since 2012. This includes approximately \$74 million for planning and pre-construction work and \$235 million to the Hudson Yards concrete casing from federal Sandy Resiliency funding under the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013.



**NJ SEED commends policymakers for undertaking the Gateway Program to alleviate the bottleneck pressure of this region and foster a more efficiency network of transporting goods and services to and from New York City and the Northeast region. NJ SEED supports the dialogue around capacity-increasing projects. This project will represent the \$13.5 billion of the \$117.5 billion plan to upgrade the East Coast corridor from Boston to Washington, D.C., and is slated to be completed by 2020. Although partially funded, the project is in need of continued support as well as financial backing in the coming years.**

## Distracted Driving

Research has shown that the combination of visual, cognitive and physical distractions caused by texting while driving are an inherently dangerous behavior and cause significant danger on our roadways each day. Texting while driving should be illegal on all roadways. Education on the inherent danger of these activities, as well as increase enforcement are necessary tools to combat this dangerous behavior.

Distracted driving is a dangerous epidemic on New Jersey’s roadways. Driver inattention has been a major contributing factor in nearly 800,000 motor vehicle crashes in the state from 2010 to 2014 and nationwide, 3,179 were killed in distracted driving crashes in 2014 alone. Map-21 has provided increase funding for awareness efforts.

**NJ SEED is pleased that Congress and the Administration have come together to designate critical, lifesaving resources for state highway safety agencies in the FAST Act. As the number of national roadway fatalities begins to climb after decades of decline, this legislation will help states fortify the programs already in place to combat the dangerous driver behaviors that contribute to 94 percent of crashes.**

