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CONTACT: Patrick Ryan (631) 793-0649

**DONOVAN QUESTIONS \$14 BILLION PROPOSAL FOR ANOTHER HUDSON RIVER TUNNEL WHILE STATEN ISLAND REMAINS LEFT OUT  
Staten Island Faces Longest Commute Times in the Country; West Shore Light Rail Deserves Consideration**

Staten Island, NY—August 19, 2015....Congressman Dan Donovan (NY-11) voiced reservations over a tentative agreement to spend \$14 billion on a new rail tunnel between New Jersey and Manhattan while Staten Island still faces the longest commute times in the country. The proposal, part of the Gateway Program, would double rail capacity into Manhattan by renovating existing lines and constructing a new, two-tube tunnel under the Hudson River.

“Modern, efficient public transportation is obviously critical to our region, and we need to do what we can to relieve congestion.” Congressman Donovan said. “But for decades Staten Island has been ignored and forgotten, and the results are clear: no community in the entire country faces a longer commute than us. It’s disheartening to sit in traffic while listening to news updates about multibillion dollar investments for another underwater rail tunnel from New Jersey to Manhattan. It’s time to get serious about viable transportation alternatives here at home.”

Through the gas tax, Staten Islanders likely pay more per capita into the Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund than the residents of any other borough. The federal government distributes those transportation dollars to state and local governments, which then prioritize projects for funding. New York City’s OneNYC plan did not identify any near-term transit expansion projects for Staten Island.

Options exist for the borough, such as a light rail on the West Shore and Bus Rapid Transit along the North Shore. Both would bring relief and opportunity by providing what the rest of New York City takes for granted – meaningful access to public transportation. The West Shore light rail alone, which would connect the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail system in New Jersey and stretch 13 miles to Richmond Valley Station, could see 13,000 riders per day.

Congressman Donovan concluded, “I understand the importance of maintaining the regional infrastructure on which millions of people rely, and I will work toward a long-term transportation bill to provide funding certainty to regional planners. Still, it’s about time Staten Island got the attention it deserves. State and local planners have to prioritize this borough’s spiraling transportation challenges.”

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