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The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development
Hearing on Recovering From Sandy: Rebuilding Our Infrastructure
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C.
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Chairman Menendez, Ranking Member DeMint, Senator Schumer, and members of the committee, thank you for holding this important hearing.

I am Pat Foye, Executive Director of The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Chairman Menendez and Senator Schumer, on behalf of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, I thank you both for your ongoing support of the Port Authority and for the people of our region.

I also want to thank Governors Andrew Cuomo of New York and Chris Christie of New Jersey for their strong leadership before, during and after Superstorm Sandy.

For those unfamiliar with our agency, the Port Authority operates what is arguably the most important multi-mode transportation network in the world.

Our transportation assets feature:

- the busiest airport system in the country, including JFK, LaGuardia, and Newark airports;
- four interstate bridges, among them the George Washington Bridge, which is the busiest vehicular crossing in the world;
- the Holland and Lincoln tunnels that link New York and New Jersey;
- the nation's busiest bus terminal, located in Midtown Manhattan;
- the largest port complex on the East Coast; and
- the bi-state commuter rail system known as PATH.

Annually, about 77 million riders take PATH, and those who rely on it will tell you it is an indispensible part of their lives. While our network is just over 13 miles long, it serves a vital link in the region, carrying passengers under the Hudson between New Jersey and New York. It is an essential artery in a region representing more than $1 trillion in economic output; fully 11% of our entire nation's GDP.

Of all our transportation facilities, PATH suffered the most severe blow in Superstorm Sandy. We took every step we could to prepare for the storm, but despite our preparations, this critical interstate link between New Jersey and New York, was completely devastated by the historic storm surge and flooding that reached over two feet above the prior 100-year flood level in Lower Manhattan.

The storm surge breached and blasted through our passenger stations and the PATH tunnels, which are ancient by many of today's mass transit standards, having been built at the turn of the last century more than 100 years ago.

The PATH network is dense and closely contained with complex tunnels interlocking underneath the Hudson. The tunnels, along with the box-like structures called caissons connecting the tunnels, contained racks upon racks of critical and decades-old signal, switching, and communications equipment that were flooded in a deluge of corrosive seawater during Sandy.

The waters damaged the signals, switching, communications, and other wayside equipment lining the tracks. Perhaps most visibly to the public, our stations themselves experienced tsunami-like conditions. Our historic Hoboken Station, one of the busiest in our system, was flooded as an enclosed elevator shaft was crushed by the strength of the floodwaters, sending millions of gallons pouring into the station.

In many of our stations, practically every wire, every circuit, every last bit of infrastructure that existed below ground was damaged, destroyed or otherwise in need of attention and repair. To compound the problem, many of the parts that Sandy destroyed are no longer manufactured because of their age and obsolescence. It has been like trying to find replacement parts for an entire fleet of Edsels in the 21st century.

Thanks to the heroic efforts of our staff and many others who came to help them, we commenced partial service restoration of the system on November 6, re-establishing service between Journal Square and 33rd Street in Manhattan. On November 12, we brought back service to Newark.

With continued round-the-clock efforts, on November 26, PATH resumed service to the World Trade Center and Exchange Place stations. And finally I am proud to say that [just yesterday], I joined PATH employees for the inaugural run of restored Hoboken service. With that, we have restored at least limited service to all of the stations in our network.

We learned during the storm that the ingenuity and dedication of our public servants is unrivaled. In the first days after the storm, one of our workers, Tom O'Neill, risked his own life to jump into several feet of murky floodwaters in a PATH tunnel to restart a pump by hand, thus preventing further flood damage. O'Neill, in his own words, "was just doing his job," and it is that attitude, that fortitude of all of our PATH employees, that continues to bring us back.

We could not have come this far on our own. Companies and factories from all over the country have helped in our recovery. In Pearl, Mississippi the employees at Trilogy Communications worked day and night, on a weekend no less, to prepare 3,200 pounds of replacement specialized communications cable for our tunnels leading to the World Trade Center.

Invensys Rail, based in Louisville, Kentucky, manufactured a replacement microprocessor for our destroyed caissons in Hoboken in record time: The process normally takes 6-9 months, but at our request, Invensys worked 24/7 to deliver the microprocessor in just six weeks.
But with PATH still operating at less than full strength, and on partial schedules, and as NJ Transit continues its own efforts to restore full service, commutes are still badly disrupted.

What normally was a 45-minute ride home for many has now doubled in length – or worse, as commuters displaced from PATH seek alternative transit, bus or ferry service. Those with late

evening shifts are still bearing the burden of limited service, having to rely on late night buses to make their way home.

We continue to rebuild and repair across our network, but as is the case for the states of New York and New Jersey, the Port Authority will need the federal government's help.

Simply, we are not at full strength and we have endured hundreds of millions of dollars of damage. Old electric substations have been patched together with cannibalized parts. Parts of our network are operating on so-called "manual block," with personnel communicating by radio to mark trains passing stations while our signaling systems are still under repair.

To bring our system back will require hundreds of millions of dollars. This will go immediately into signal system repairs, electric substation repairs, track-work, and communications systems, and the rehab of rolling stock that was partially submerged in salt water. We are still tallying the damage, but we now estimate that the costs to fully repair and restore the PATH system may total over $700 million dollars – more than $400 million than what we originally estimated to repair our system.

It is also critical that we invest in mitigation measures to protect our system from future storms so that we do not find ourselves in the same situation just a few years from now. This will include projects such as elevating portions of our track, elevating critical substations, and strengthening critical caisson rooms within our tunnels beneath the Hudson River. These mitigation measures will come at significant cost, but without them, as we have learned over the last two months, the costs are even higher.

Some of you know that the Port Authority receives no taxpayer money from either New York or New Jersey. We rely exclusively on user fees – the fares our passengers pay, and rents and other fees – all revenue streams that have their limitations. We are still assessing the exact costs of repair and recovery, but our needs are significant.

I urge Congress to act as soon as possible in approving recovery funding for the New York, New Jersey and Connecticut region. The final costs no doubt will be high, but the costs—should we fail to make necessary repairs and investments—are unfathomable in terms of the cost of lost productivity, a fractured transportation network, and the economic output that it powers.

Thank you for your help, and for inviting me to speak today.