



STATE OF NEW YORK

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ALBANY, N.Y. 12232

[www.dot.ny.gov](http://www.dot.ny.gov)

JOAN McDONALD  
COMMISSIONER

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
GOVERNOR

November 5, 2012

Honorable Brian Higgins  
United States House of Representatives  
726 Exchange Street, Suite 601  
Buffalo, NY 14210

Dear Representative Higgins:

Thank you for your letter regarding the long-term future of the Buffalo Skyway and its compatibility with development along the Buffalo waterfront. Governor Cuomo is committed to contributing to the growth of the economy in Buffalo. He and the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council have highlighted the strong link between transportation and economic development.

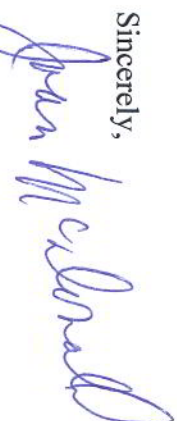
The Buffalo Skyway is an important component of the Buffalo metropolitan area transportation network, serving commuters, tourists and freight for more than 50 years. Using a critical strategy to preserving our aging infrastructure across all of New York State, we look to maintain our roads and bridges in a state of good repair to forestall major capital needs that could otherwise arise from neglect. The Skyway has been well maintained and does not require major capital work; however, preservation work, such as replacement of the wearing surface, and painting at an estimated combined cost of \$35 million, likely will be necessary within five to 10 years.

Recognizing the significant investment associated with preserving the Skyway, I agree that it is appropriate to identify and to assess alternatives to the continued existence of the Skyway. Because of the Skyway's importance in the existing transportation system, any discussion of removal must be given a full assessment. While significant bridge work is several years away, we must begin this assessment in the near term. I have directed my staff to conduct a "plausibility review" to identify the critical issues associated with an undertaking of this complexity. Once this review is completed, we will be better able to have a meaningful discussion on the Skyway's future. We will include your staff in this review and I will personally keep you informed as to the status.

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I look forward to more dialogue about this potentially transformational undertaking.  
If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at  
(518) 457-4422 or Darrell Kaminski, Acting Director, at (716) 847-3238.

Sincerely,



Joan McDonald  
Commissioner

cc: Roderic Sechrist, Assistant Commissioner, Operations & Asset Management Division  
Diane Lombardi, Director, Office of External Relations  
Darrell F. Kaminski, Acting Regional Director, Region 5

*Comgratulations!  
I look forward this  
to be a very productive  
important meeting  
with your presence*