

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 115

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman RALPH R. CAPUTO

District 28 (Essex)

Assemblyman ROBERT J. KARABINCHAK

District 18 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Urges President and Congress of the United States to create National Infrastructure Bank.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION** urging the President and Congress of
2 the United States to create a National Infrastructure Bank.

3
4 **WHEREAS**, The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) stated in
5 its 2017 report card that the United States received a grade of “D”
6 regarding the current state of infrastructure, and that \$4.6 trillion
7 would be needed to restore the country’s infrastructure to a state of
8 good repair. Current funding falls over \$2 trillion short of this
9 amount. Urgently needed programs, including passenger transit
10 systems and high-speed rail, broadband, clean water supply
11 systems, power grid upgrades, flood control, and others, are not
12 included; and

13 **WHEREAS**, The State of New Jersey was given a “D+” grade by the
14 ASCE on its most recent report card in 2016. Over 11 percent of
15 New Jersey’s bridges are labelled as structurally deficient, and most
16 have reached or exceeded their expected lifespan. New Jersey dams
17 are graded as a “D,” with 178 dams receiving a “poor” rating by the
18 New Jersey Bureau of Dam Safety. New Jersey’s drinking water
19 infrastructure received a “C” grade in 2016, with most systems
20 approaching 100 years of age; and

21 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey levees were graded “D-” and roads were
22 graded “D+;” 64 percent of State roads are deemed heavily
23 congested; and time spent sitting in traffic increases air pollution
24 and adds hundreds of dollars to commuter costs every year; and

25 **WHEREAS**, These infrastructure issues are in addition to the critical
26 condition that has developed within the tunnels under the Hudson
27 River that support commerce between New Jersey and Manhattan.
28 These 108-year old tunnels carry 20 percent of the national GDP on
29 a daily basis, and the collapse of one or both tunnels would be
30 cataclysmic. Additionally, the bridges carrying trains to the tunnels,
31 the Portal Bridge and others, need urgent repair or outright
32 replacement. These tunnels form a chokepoint, the failure or
33 shutdown of which would have a ripple effect on transportation and
34 commerce throughout New Jersey and the region; and

35 **WHEREAS**, The United States has previously utilized national banks to
36 direct financing into infrastructure construction, with policies
37 implemented in the administrations of Presidents George
38 Washington, John Quincy Adams, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin
39 Delano Roosevelt. Much of the nation’s infrastructure at the time,
40 including that in the State of New Jersey, was financed this way;
41 and

42 **WHEREAS**, A new National Infrastructure Bank can be created to
43 direct \$4 trillion to urgently needed infrastructure concerns. This
44 bank can be funded with no new federal appropriations, by
45 exchanging a small portion of Treasury debt, in the amount of \$500
46 billion, for stock in the bank. The new bank, operating as a
47 commercial bank, could lend out \$4 trillion to states, counties,

1 municipalities, and other governmental entities at a low interest in
2 order to finance their infrastructure projects; and
3 **WHEREAS**, Seventeen state legislatures have filed similar resolutions,
4 and three state legislatures have passed resolutions in a bipartisan
5 vote. This policy has been endorsed by many national
6 organizations, including the National Congress of Black Women,
7 National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association, and the
8 National Federation of Federal Employees; and many local entities,
9 including the Mercer County Board of Freeholders and the Trenton
10 City Council; now, therefore,

11
12 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New*
13 *Jersey:*

14
15 1. This House respectfully urges the President and Congress of
16 the United States to enact legislation creating a new National
17 Infrastructure Bank to address the infrastructure crisis that has
18 gripped the nation.

19
20 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
21 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the
22 President of the United States and to every member of the New
23 Jersey Congressional delegation.

24

25

26 **STATEMENT**

27

28 This resolution respectfully urges the President and Congress of
29 the United States to create a new National Infrastructure Bank, to
30 provide low-interest loans to state and local government entities for
31 infrastructure projects.