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Subject: Senate Transportation Committee Approves Creation of New Gateway Development Commission

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NEW JERSEY SENATE

FOR RELEASE:

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Senate Transportation Committee Approves Creation of New Gateway Development Commission

Diegnan, Kean laud NJ-NY-Amtrak partnership as critical to build new tunnels, expand rail capacity and spur economic growth

Trenton – Legislation sponsored by Senate Transportation Committee Chairman Patrick J. Diegnan, Jr. and Senate Minority Leader Tom Kean creating the Gateway Development Commission was approved on Thursday by the Senate Transportation Committee.

“Funding the Gateway Project is a top priority of Governor Murphy and the Legislature,” said Senator Diegnan (D-Middlesex). “This bipartisan bill will facilitate planning and construction by creating the framework for a new bi-state agency which will have the power to secure funding on its own. The participation of New Jersey, New York, and Amtrak demonstrates the regional impact of, and a regional commitment to, this project.”

“The Gateway Project will increase NJ Transit rail commuter capacity to and from New York Penn Station by 70,000 riders a day and enable NJ Transit to provide direct one-seat rides on every rail line,” said Senator Kean (R-Union). “The Morris & Essex Line’s Midtown Direct rail service is a major reason that downtowns like Morristown, Madison and South Orange are now thriving, and

we need that same transit-oriented development to spur economic growth on the Raritan Valley Line and throughout North and Central Jersey.”

The bill, S-3410, proposes the creation of the Gateway Development Commission, which would act under federal law as the coordinating agency for the purpose of receiving and distributing public and private funding for the Gateway Project.

The commission would be composed of one member appointed by the board of NJ Transit, one by the commissioner of the New York Department of Transportation, and one by Amtrak as the owner-operator of the Northeast Corridor. In order to safeguard New Jersey’s interests, the bill provides for a rotating chairmanship between New Jersey and New York and requires the unanimous vote of all three members for the commission to act.

The bill further authorizes the commission to apply for grants and funding, obtain loans, and issue bonds, as well as to acquire property. As the bill creates a bi-state entity, New York State is required to enact substantially identical legislation. Such a measure is currently pending.

The committee approved the bill by a 5-0 vote. The legislation now awaits consideration by the full Senate.

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