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https://therealdeal.com/2017/06/09/white-house-sending-troubling-signals-on-funding-gateway-state-official-says/

# White House sending "troubling" signals on funding Gateway, state official says

Trump cut key federal funding from his proposed budget

*New Jersey, New York City, Carlo Scissura, Ali Chaudhry and Andrew Cuomo (Credit: Getty Images)*

By Kathryn Brenzel

A high-ranking member of Gov. Andrew Cuomo's administration on Friday called the Gateway tunnel project "the single most important infrastructure project in the country." Unfortunately, he said, the White House doesn't seem to agree.

"All the signs out of Washington are troubling," said Ali Chaudhry, Cuomo's newly appointed deputy secretary of transportation. "It should really be something that the federal government is prioritizing, but we just don't see that."

The $20 billion project, which will link Newark, New Jersey with Manhattan, has been in limbo since Gov. Chris Christie scrapped its precursor project, Access to the Region's Core (ARC), in 2010. The Gateway project has gained a lot of traction lately due to ongoing issues at Penn Station and an increasingly apparent need for a transportation system that can accommodate the region's growing traffic.

Last month, U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao called Gateway an "absolute priority," even though President Donald Trump's proposed budget excluded funding key to the project. New Jersey and New York had

cut a deal with the Obama administration to split the cost of the tunnel, but it's unclear if that agreement will ultimately stand.

Chaudhry spoke at a New York Building Congress event in Brooklyn. Much of his presentation focused on touting Cuomo's plan to invest $100 billion in state infrastructure. New York Building Congress President Carlo Scissura noted the "national perspectives" that will impact Gateway but praised the Cuomo administration for pushing forward several public projects.

"We'll look forward to a lot of ribbon cuttings and groundbreakings in the coming years," he said
When asked by an audience member about an idea floated by nonprofit groups, including ReThink NYC, to transform Penn Station into a through station that would link to hubs outside of Manhattan, Chaudhry noted that the administration is "always looking for those innovative creative ideas." But, he said, the ideas ultimately have to be "politically and financially viable."

"We're in the business of getting things done," he said.

When another audience member asked about his hopes for the new Port Authority Bus Terminal, Chaudhry mostly demurred. That project has been a flashpoint in the tensions between the governor, other New York politicians, and the New Jersey-appointed leaders at the Port Authority.

"Something that everyone is happy with," Chadhry joked.