

Testimony of Zach Miller

On Behalf of

Trucking Association of New York

Before the

**New York City Council
Committee on Transportation
February 25, 2020**

Regarding

The Future of the BQE

Good Morning. My name is Zach Miller and I am testifying on behalf of Kendra Hems, President of the Trucking Association of New York (TANY). I would like to thank Chairman Rodriguez as well as the members of the committees for the opportunity to testify before you today. For over 85 years, TANY, a non-profit trade group, has represented the trucking industry in New York, advocating for the industry at the local, state and federal levels. We provide educational programs to our membership, which enhance their safety and maintenance efforts and offer numerous councils and committees to meet the diverse needs of our membership. TANY comprises over 600 member companies from New York, Canada, every border state, and other states across the country and is the exclusive New York affiliate of the American Trucking Associations (ATA).

The Brooklyn Queens Expressway (BQE) is a critical freight corridor for the trucking industry and is officially designated by the Federal Highway Administration as part of the National Highway Freight Network. It serves as an important intermodal corridor with an interconnected network of roadway and rail-freight facilities between the New-Jersey connection at the Goethals Bridge and the Queens-Bronx connection at the Triborough Bridge, including rail-freight connections across New York Harbor between Bayonne, New Jersey and Southwest Brooklyn.

There are four major concentrations of port facilities in close proximity to the I-278 corridor that generate a significant number of truck trips. Additionally, I-278 receives a large share of freight traffic from Howland Hook/New York Container Terminal in Staten Island and the Red Hook Container Terminal in Brooklyn. It is also used by trucks originating from the ports in New Jersey that are destined for Staten Island, Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island. In addition to these facilities, there are a handful of secondary freight sites that contribute to the volume of trucks on the Corridor including Hunts Point, the Brooklyn Navy Yard and Newtown Creek.

The vast majority of truck traffic along the corridor is local. The corridor serves as a significant first and last mile connector, meaning there would not be a significant reduction in truck traffic along this corridor even as initiatives to shift truck freight to other modes of transportation move forward.

Given all this, it is critical that as various plans for the BQE are considered, the need to continue to move freight efficiently along the corridor must be a priority.

That said, we understand recent concerns regarding overweight trucks operating on the BQE. A top priority for TANY is safety. As an association we do not condone operating overweight vehicles without proper permits to do so. However, this issue is indicative of a larger policy issue. At one time the NYC Department of Transportation issued overweight permits but has since stopped that practice. At the time the practice was stopped, trucks that

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currently had these permits were allowed to keep them. This has created a system of “haves vs. have-nots” and have placed trucks that do not have the permits at a competitive disadvantage. In order to effectively address the issue of overweight trucks, reform of the Departments overweight permit system is needed. We are committed to working hand-in-hand with the City to find a solution to this challenge to protect our infrastructure, keep our roadways safe and keep our economy moving forward.

Trucks are central to our economy and our way of life. Every time decisions are made that affect the trucking industry; those impacts are felt by millions of individuals as well as the businesses that could not exist without trucks.

We appreciate the opportunity to be here today and look forward to working with the Council on this important issue.

Thank you for your time and I’m happy to answer any questions.

Trucking Association of New York

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