

NJ INTERSTATES ARE WORSE THAN YOU THINK – AND MAY NEED TO BE REBUILT, STUDY FINDS



David Matthau | June 22, 2021

A new report finds New Jersey's Interstate highways are among the most traveled and congested in the nation, and they are also falling apart at a faster rate than highways in most other states.

The [report](#) was prepared by TRIP, a national transportation research nonprofit organization, at the request of Congress as deliberation continues about additional infrastructure investment.

Rocky Moretti, director of policy and research at TRIP,

said the Interstate system is the most critical transportation link in the country but unfortunately in New Jersey's Interstate highways are not in great shape.

"New Jersey is ranked as having the 3rd greatest of its urban Interstates congested," he said. "81% of urban interstates in New Jersey are congested."

Moretti said New Jersey and other heavily traveled states will increasingly have to begin reconstructing highways instead of simply repaving them.

"We're seeing a point of diminishing returns on Interstate highways, which means simple repaving aren't lasting as long as they should because the sub-bases are deteriorating," he said.

He said the report also finds New Jersey ranks 10th highest in the nation for the Interstate travel per lane mile and we're 19th in the country in terms of the share of its interstate bridges that are rated structurally deficient.

He pointed out 63% of New Jersey Interstate bridges are more than 50 years old, and "that's a point where engineers say significant repairs and in some cases even replacements are going to be necessary."

He noted the report also finds travel on New Jersey interstates increased by 36% between 2000 and 2019 — "one of the largest increases across the country, higher than the U.S. average of 26%."

The report finds annual investment in the interstate highway system should be increased approximately two-and-a-half times, from \$23 billion in 2018 to \$57 billion annually over the next 20 years.

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