



Leo W. Gerard
International President

May 23, 2013

Mr. Fernando Ferrer, Acting Chairman
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Mr. Thomas F. Prendergast, Interim Executive Director
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Subject: Verrazano-Narrows Bridge

Dear Mr. Ferrer and Mr. Prendergast:

I noted with interest recent media reports regarding the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's plan to rebuild the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge using nearly 15,000 tons of steel, all sourced from China. On behalf of the 850,000 members of the United Steelworkers, the millions of American industrial workers – many of whom are working reduced hours, are laid off or unemployed — and the millions of New Yorkers who demand and deserve the best and safest transportation network in the world, I urge you to reconsider immediately.

American workers produce the highest-quality, safest products in the world. This is particularly true in the case of steel. American steelmakers and steelworkers have the drive, the know-how, and more than enough capacity to supply the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge project with the best steel in the world made at the safest and most environmentally-responsible plants in the world. In addition, much less pollution will result from shipping steel for the project from American plants, some of which are located within 100 miles of the bridge, than would be from hauling it halfway around the world from China.

In a time when it seems that Americans cannot agree on anything, one thing they do agree on is that they want their infrastructure built with American materials. Just last year, the Alliance for American Manufacturing conducted a poll in which they asked

whether large infrastructure projects should be built in America, by American workers, using American steel and other products. Some 81 percent of respondents were in favor *even when the best arguments for simple lowest-bidder contracting were offered as rebuttal*. The people are making their voice heard loud and clear, and it is high time you listened to them.

Given all this, it was particularly troubling that your spokesperson drew the distinction that projects built with toll dollars like the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge are exempt from Buying American because that only applies to projects built with tax dollars. It does a disservice to your constituents to have their transportation authority looking for loopholes and technicalities to avoid doing what the people want.

New York is one of America's – and the world's – greatest cities, and many of the landmarks that make the city great, from the Empire State Building to Rockefeller Center to Madison Square Garden, were built with the best quality American steel. According to published reports this bridge project represents the first time that the Chinese State Owned Entity (SOE) that you have chosen has produced this particular product. Those iconic, strong and lasting monuments tell the story of America to the world, and the idea that you would turn your back on that legacy in order to save a few dollars while buying potentially inferior product from a neophyte producer is scandalous.

We urge you to reconsider and ensure that the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, and any other infrastructure projects you undertake in the future, be made of the best products in the world, made by the best workers in the world, right here in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leo W. Gerard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Leo W. Gerard
International President

c: Governor Andrew M. Cuomo
New York State Members of Congress
New York State Senate
New York State Assembly