

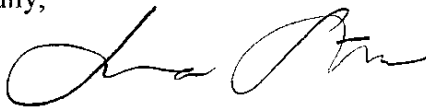
Statement regarding Tappan Zee Bridge
Susanna Styron, resident of South Nyack
January 15, 2003

Anyone who has read the book "Shoeless Joe" or seen the movie "Field of Dreams" knows the phrase "If you build it, he will come". That phrase has such resonance because it is a law of nature: people use spaces available to them; things expand to fill available space. If you build another bridge or a wider thruway, the traffic will come. The current Tappan Zee Bridge is a perfect example. It was built to accommodate 100,000 vehicles a day and now handles 130,000. That is not because traffic engineers miscalculated – it is because, like Mt. Everest, "it is there". How could anyone possibly think that a new bridge would not, within time, be handling traffic way beyond its original capacity? It is not a solution to the traffic problem, it is a contribution to it. It seems obvious, then, that the solution is to REDUCE traffic, not increase it, and there are viable alternatives, which have either not been thoroughly investigated, or are victims of political infighting, in particular the West Shore rail line which would carry commuters to New York City.

I have heard it argued that only 30% of Tappan Zee traffic is New York City bound. But according to all reports, the bridge is in fact 30% over capacity, so easing New York bound traffic would seem to be exactly what the object should be. More is not always better, and progress – though it moves inexorably forward – does not necessarily have to mean bigger and faster, and more money spent. Perhaps in this case progress means making a choice for our environment and our communities, which starts with revitalizing the West Shore rail line and reducing traffic and its inherent air and noise pollution, across the current Tappan Zee Bridge.

If an expansion of traffic through that corridor is absolutely inevitable, I would strongly argue for the tunnel solution, which would bring the least amount of air and noise pollution to the region.

Respectfully,



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