

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1667

To require a report on the contingency plan of the Department of Transportation in the event of the failure of a rail track in the North River Tunnel, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 11, 2019

Mr. GOTTHEIMER (for himself and Mr. KING of New York) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To require a report on the contingency plan of the Department of Transportation in the event of the failure of a rail track in the North River Tunnel, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Preventing Domsday
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) 200,000 riders travel through the 111 year
2 old, two-track North River Tunnel under the Hud-
3 son River daily.

4 (2) The North River Tunnel serves a region
5 that is home to 17 percent of the United States pop-
6 ulation which contributes 20 percent to the national
7 Gross Domestic Product.

8 (3) The Northeast Corridor, which is operated
9 by Amtrak and runs between Boston, Massachusetts
10 and Washington, DC, has the highest ridership of
11 any intercity rail line in the United States and runs
12 directly through the North River Tunnel.

13 (4) Superstorm Sandy caused \$65 billion worth
14 of damages and 147 direct deaths in 2012, exacer-
15 bating the need to perform extensive repairs to both
16 tracks. A new tunnel must be built to keep regular
17 train service running while the damage is fixed.

18 (5) According to the Regional Plan Association,
19 if one of the tracks loses functionality and needs to
20 be shut down, the national economy could lose \$16
21 billion over a 4-year span, equivalent to the loss of
22 33,000 jobs.

23 (6) A tunnel shutdown would significantly de-
24 crease transportation options in the region, increas-

1 ing commute times in many cases by more than an
2 hour a day.

3 (7) A tunnel shutdown could also cause \$22 bil-
4 lion in decreased property values, \$7 billion in lost
5 tax revenue for Federal, State, and local govern-
6 ments, and 38,000 additional car crashes.

7 (8) Currently, only 24 trains can use the tunnel
8 every hour. That number would drop to 6 in the
9 event of a shutdown.

10 (9) The Gateway Program, which incorporates
11 the Hudson Tunnel Project, would double the num-
12 ber of trains per hour by building a new, flood-proof
13 tunnel.

14 (10) The Federal Transit Administration rated
15 the Hudson Tunnel Project “Medium-Low” in re-
16 sponse to the project’s s5309 Capital Investment
17 Grant submission.

18 **SEC. 3. REPORT.**

19 Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment
20 of this Act, the Secretary of Transportation shall publish
21 a report that explains—

22 (1) the contingency plan of the Department of
23 Transportation, in coordination with other relevant
24 Federal agencies, detailing a specific plan of action
25 in the case of a shutdown of a track described in

1 section 2(1) and that addresses issues including en-
2 suring commuters, tourists, and others will maintain
3 the ability to travel between New Jersey and New
4 York and throughout the region; and

5 (2) the contingency plan of the Department of
6 Transportation, in coordination with other relevant
7 Federal agencies, detailing a specific plan of action
8 to ensure minimal disruption to, and negative im-
9 pact on national security, the economy, public
10 health, the environment, and property values.

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