



## NJDOT honcho to meet with Staten Island officials over Skyway project that will divert 105 express buses to SIE

Goethals Bridge.jpg

The Goethals Bridge will act as a conduit for 105 express buses to the Staten Island Expressway during morning rush hour once the Pulaski Skyway replacement project kicks in next month. *(Advance File Photo)*

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STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- A closed-door sit-down with the head of NJDOT over the multi-year shutdown of the Pulaski Skyway -- that will divert more than 100 Manhattan-bound express buses to the Staten Island Expressway via the Goethals Bridge during morning rush-hour -- is being held in Sea View Friday morning.

Rep. Michael Grimm and the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce are hosting New Jersey Department of Transportation Commissioner James Simpson for a round-table discussion in the Lou Caravone Building on Brielle Avenue.

Grimm (R-Staten Island/Brooklyn), who revealed the plan last month, blasted it as a "complete and total slap in the face to Staten Islanders," pointing out that the artery is already heavily congested and in the middle of a major overhaul.

A spokesman for the New York State Department of Transportation, which is overseeing the SIE rebuild, told the Advance NJDOT had not given the state the heads-up about diverting traffic that could bring thousands of cars here in addition to the buses as soon as next month.

But Simpson downplayed the added traffic in an interview with the Advance last month.

"It won't be a problem," said Simpson, a former Island businessman and GOP fund-raiser. "You can't shut down the Goethals Bridge to anyone. They have a right to take the roadway. It is 105 buses, over a 4-hour period, with which is nothing.

But Dr. Jonathan Peters of the Center for the Study of Staten Island disagreed.

"Any time you add extra traffic to the Staten Island Expressway is not good," said Peters, a College of Staten Island professor.

Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis (R-East Shore/Brooklyn) is expected to participate in the meeting and other elected officials were invited, too, Grimm's office said. Community Board members are also expected to be on

hand.

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