

# International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers



January 28, 2022

## Iron Workers Statement on Collapse of Frick Park Bridge

The International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers shares the distress of the city of Pittsburgh, and many others, at the news of this morning's bridge collapse near Frick Park. We are lucky that no one was seriously injured, but the incident underlines the urgent need for federal funding to fix America's crumbling infrastructure. This is exactly the type of incident that the U.S. Bipartisan Infrastructure Law was designed and passed to prevent, and we commend the U.S. Department of Transportation for its recent announcement of the Bridge Formula Program and RAISE grants funded by the law.

As a union of 128,000 workers who have done bridge construction for 125 years, we are deeply familiar with the high safety standards of bridges and the terrible consequences when they fail. We have witnessed numerous bridge closures and collapses in recent years, yet tens of thousands of bridges remain structurally deficient due to lack of funding for upgrades and replacements.

It is imperative that funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is disbursed quickly and without delay so these critical projects can get underway immediately. The Bridge Formula Program, RAISE grants, and grants designated for climate resiliency are all important tools to stop collapses like this from happening in the future. Members of our union are ready and able to get to work repairing the Frick Park Bridge and others like it.

The Frick Park Bridge also highlights the importance of skill and safety. Few structures must perform to the same standard as a heavily traveled commuter bridge, exposed to the wind and constant punishing weight of traffic. They must be built by workers trained with the highest standards of skill, such as those taught in building trades registered apprenticeships. They also require quality materials, not cheap overseas imports, to safely bear traffic for decades on end.

The Transportation Department's formula and grant program announcements are an important step forward. Our union looks forward to working with the Biden administration to create good union jobs repairing America's bridges.

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