

## United States Senate

October 20, 2017

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: New Hampshire DOT TIGER Grant Application for I-89 Lebanon, NH-Hartford, VT Bridge Project

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write to support the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER 9) Discretionary Grant proposal in the amount of \$10 million submitted by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation for the "*I-89 Lebanon-Hartford Bridge Project*." This project addresses the regional need for these critical Interstate Bridges, which carry Interstate 89 Northbound and Southbound over the Connecticut River and connect the communities of Hartford, Vermont, and Lebanon, New Hampshire.

Built in 1966, these bridges are in poor condition. Due to their age and harsh northern climate, the deterioration has progressed to the extent where they are structurally deficient. This project will address the bridges' structural deficiency and improve travel reliability on this critical regional transportation network.

These bridges are critical for the movement of people and goods locally, regionally and internationally. They carry Interstate 89, which is the major Boston to Montreal international trade route corridor, and serves to provide a connection to Interstate 91 and Interstate 93, which connect New England with Canadian trade markets. The bridges also serve as a major connector to New England's major seaports and intermodal facilities. Without the bridges, freight traffic would need to detour 50 or more miles and rely on secondary highways, critically impeding the reliable transport of goods. These bridges serve the Lebanon micropolitan statistical area, the nation's largest such area with a population of 218,466 in New Hampshire and Vermont. In addition to commuter and freight traffic, local transit and intercity buses rely on this corridor.

These bridges are also crucial to the connectivity, economic vitality, and quality of life for both New Hampshire and Vermont. Businesses in the area utilize these bridges daily to facilitate delivery of goods and services throughout the region. The bridges serve as a link to the downtown areas of Lebanon, New Hampshire and White River Junction, Vermont for retail, tourism, and service industries. This project will address regional transportation needs, and ensure the continued economic well-being of these two communities and the region.

The I-89 Lebanon-Hartford Bridge Project is consistent with the state of good repair plans for both NHDOT and VTrans, and appears in New Hampshire's approved Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan and Vermont's State Transportation Improvement Program.

This is a significant investment for the region that would maintain and enhance the quality of life of the area residents and promote economic development. I am pleased to offer my support for this application and hope you will look upon it favorably.

With every good wish,



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Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator

CC: Commissioner Victoria Shaheen, NH DOT  
Secretary Joseph Flynn, VTrans