

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

July 30, 2013

The Honorable Anthony Foxx  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

As you may know, in 1994 the New Hampshire Department of Transportation initiated a project to replace the Sewalls Falls Bridge in Concord, NH. We write to urge that the Federal Highway Administration approve the City of Concord's environmental analysis and proposal to replace the bridge, and that the FHWA utilize all existing authority to expedite this critical effort.

The Sewalls Falls Bridge, constructed in 1915, is a one-lane roadway that provides local access to both the east and the west sides of the Merrimack River in the northern section of Concord. This bridge is the only local link in the area that does not require drivers to use Interstate 93 to cross the Merrimack. A recent structural inspection and load rating analysis undertaken by the City of Concord revealed that the Bridge's structural components have deteriorated significantly and would be prohibitively expensive to rehabilitate. As a consequence of this inspection, it is likely that the maximum permitted vehicle weight on the Sewalls Falls Bridge will be downgraded to three tons, which would significantly lengthen emergency response times to certain areas of Concord. We are troubled by the impact a weight downgrade could have on public safety and know that, as a former Mayor, you understand our concern.

In order to ensure that any disruption of emergency response services is minimized, we respectfully urge that the Federal Highway Administration authorize the City of Concord to replace the Sewalls Falls Bridge without delay. Moreover, we request that the Federal Highway Administration continue to work with Concord officials to shorten the project delivery timeline using all applicable procedures established through the Every Day Counts Initiative. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Victor M. Mendez  
Federal Highway Administration