

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 20, 2017

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

Dear Secretary Chao,

I write in support of the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER 9) Discretionary Grant proposal submitted by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NH DOT) for the “*I-89 Lebanon-Hartford Bridge Project*.” NH DOT and its partners in Vermont would use these funds to rehabilitate two regionally significant Interstate Bridges that cross the Connecticut River and connect Vermont and New Hampshire.

These bridges carry Interstate-89, a vital highway in New Hampshire that links the western part of the state to Vermont and into Canada. As part of an international trade route corridor connecting New England with Canadian markets, they are used heavily by freight traffic that would need to detour 50 miles if the bridges were not there. In addition to serving commuter and freight traffic, 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, and they serve as a link for retail, tourism, and service industries to the downtown areas of Lebanon, New Hampshire and White River Junction, Vermont.

Built in 1966, these bridges have withstood 50 years of heavy traffic and a harsh northern climate. The deterioration has progressed to the extent where they are structurally-deficient. This project will replace the existing deck and superstructure and widen the current bridges, essentially replacing them with a new combined structure. Roadway safety will also be improved by eliminating substandard ramp merge distances and providing standard shoulder width.

The project is consistent with the state of good repair plans for both NHDOT and VTTrans 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 area residents and promote economic development. I am pleased to offer my support for this application and hope you will look upon it favorably.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

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