

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 15, 2016

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

Dear Secretary Foxx,

I write to express my strong support of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) in its application for a “Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-Term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE)” grant. Funding from this program would replace the Rogers’ Rangers Bridge, a jointly-owned piece of infrastructure that provides its owners – the states of New Hampshire and Vermont – with an essential local and regional connection to a larger trade corridor between Boston and Montreal.

Originally constructed in 1950, the Rogers’ Rangers Bridge provides travelers on U.S. Route 2 with a crossing of the Connecticut River. It is critical to the movement of freight and people locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. With no other nearby east-west freight routes in the northern portions of New Hampshire and Vermont, U.S. Route 2 links the region to two important highways – Interstates 91 and 93 – that connect the area to the Canadian trade markets to the north as well as the larger New England seaports to the south. The bridge is also used by residents of nearby communities for quicker access to educational and medical facilities. Children from Guildhall and Gilman, VT cross the bridge to attend schools in Lancaster, NH, where the region’s nearest medical facility is also located. Without the bridge, response time for Weeks Medical Center would increase by 15 minutes, thereby impacting citizens’ welfare.

Old age and the harsh northern climate has deteriorated the truss bridge to an extent that it is now considered structurally-deficient. The bridge’s current capacity limits movement of heavier loads needed for the forestry-related industry, a source of many jobs in the region. A new concrete deck and steel girder bridge with unlimited vertical clearance will eliminate freight and vehicular impact that occurs with the existing bridge, provide a snowmobile path in a region that relies so heavily on tourism, improve stormwater collection and treatment, and improve the intersection of U.S. Route 2 and VT Route 102 in Guildhall by reducing accident conflict points and the potential for crashes.

NHDOT’s application seeks \$5 million of the approximate total cost of \$11.5 million. FASTLANE funding will accelerate the construction of the bridge and allow New Hampshire and Vermont to move this important project forward without sacrificing maintenance and preservation of other important components of the transportation network. Given that New Hampshire receives the least amount of federal transportation dollars, the State hopes to be awarded these funds to advance a bridge that establishes local, interstate and international connectivity.

I support NHDOT in its application for FASTLANE grant funding and urge your serious consideration of their proposal. If you have any questions, please contact Jon Jarvis from my staff at (603) 647-7500.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator