

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

October 30, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We write today in strong support of the application from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) for funding to replace the Interstate 83 John Harris Memorial Bridge (“I-83 South Bridge”) over the Susquehanna River. Although this bridge is in South Central Pennsylvania, it is critical for all counties of the Commonwealth that this one-billion-dollar project receive federal assistance.

The I-83 South Bridge is an important piece of the Pennsylvania transportation network, facilitating connections to intermodal freight terminals, job opportunities, schools, and businesses large and small. With over 125,000 vehicles travelling over the bridge every day, it is crucial that this structure remain open and fully capable of carrying high volumes of traffic.

However, PennDOT officials have informed us that the sixty-year-old I-83 South Bridge is now in “poor condition” and at risk of having weight limits imposed. We understand that there are cracks in the steel beams of the structure that will only continue to get worse, and that the scope of deterioration means that the bridge must be replaced, not rehabilitated.

The I-83 South Bridge was part of a larger collection of nine interstate bridges that the Commonwealth had intended to replace using revenue from a tolling plan. After Pennsylvania’s Commonwealth Court struck down the tolling plan, the Commonwealth entered a public-private partnership to replace six of these bridges, but not the I-83 South Bridge. As such, the I-83 South Bridge remains the biggest unfunded transportation project in Pennsylvania.

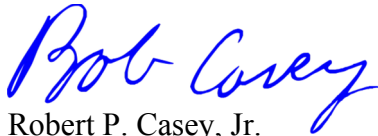
Per PennDOT estimates, the cost of replacing this bridge is \$1.1 to \$1.3 billion. For reference, during the five-year lifespan of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Pennsylvania will receive \$1.6 billion in dedicated funding for repairing and replacing bridges. Without funding through federal discretionary grant programs, PennDOT will have to allocate formula funding towards the project, jeopardizing dozens of other projects across the Commonwealth.

As such, we write as representatives of all corners of Pennsylvania to underscore the statewide importance of this application. Funding the I-83 South Bridge replacement project will not just benefit Dauphin and Cumberland Counties, but also ensure that projects from Greene County to Wayne County receive funding and can advance.

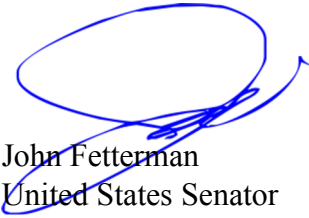
In order to maximize the historic investments from the IIJA, it is essential that the I-83 South Bridge receive federal discretionary funding. We thank you for your attention on this issue and look forward to working with your Department on this and other issues that affect Pennsylvania.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact Senator Casey's staff at (202) 224-6324.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



John Fetterman
United States Senator



Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Glenn "GT" Thompson
Member of Congress



Daniel Meuser
Member of Congress



Matt Cartwright
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress



Summer Lee
Member of Congress



Scott Perry
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John Joyce, M.D.
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan
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Dwight Evans
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Mike Kelly
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Madeleine Dean
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Chris Deluzio
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Guy Reschenthaler
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Lloyd Smucker
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Susan Wild

Member of Congress