

ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.  
PENNSYLVANIA

COMMITTEES:  
FINANCE

HEALTH, EDUCATION,  
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON INTELLIGENCE

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 27, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write today in support of the joint application submitted by Delaware County and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) to the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) program for the “Design of Route 291 Safety Improvements” project. I urge you to give this application full and fair consideration.

Route 291 is a major crosstown feature in the City of Chester that divides residents from the waterfront but is also the location for the East Coast Greenway - a planned multi-state, multi-purpose trail. Delaware County tells me that nearly 40% of households within a block of Route 291 do not have a vehicle and that a significant share of those families are living below the poverty line. I also understand that the City of Chester is designated as both an Area of Persistent Poverty as well as an Historically Disadvantaged Community and it is burdened with old transportation improvements that slice the city into strips. Beyond Route 291, these dividing investments include Interstate 95 and CSX and AMTRAK/SEPTA rail lines.

The applicants tell me that Route 291 is currently the subject of a Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and PennDOT sponsored study, set to conclude at the end of 2023, that will determine feasible safety improvements that can be implemented along the roadway that align with continuing transportation needs. It is my understanding that the proposed grant funding will be used to engage with the community and collaboratively design safety improvements along Route 291 in the City of Chester. I am told that these funds will allow for a final product that improves safety and reconnects the City with its waterfront and key employment centers. Additionally, the inclusion of the East Coast Greenway provides residents and visitors with the added benefit of simultaneously supporting an important recreational and multi-modal transportation resource.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration. Please include this letter in the official record of the application. Consistent with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations, I also respectfully request that you keep me informed of the status of this grant application. Finally, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact me or my staff at (202) 224-6324.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator