

October 23, 2017

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Charter Oak Bridge INFRA Grant Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) is pleased to support the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) in its submittal of an Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant application for the Charter Oak Bridge Project. More than 90% of the freight value that moves through the Capitol Region does so on trucks. Projects designed to increase the safety and efficiency of truck movements are therefore of critical importance to the Capitol Region. The Charter Oak Bridge Project is an example of a construction program that will result in a substantial improvement to freight movements and economic conditions in the Region.

The Charter Oak Bridge carries Routes 5 and 15 over the Connecticut River and serves as a connector between Interstates 91 and 84. This location has been identified as one of the top 100 freight bottlenecks in the country, and CRCOG recognizes the negative impacts that such bottlenecks have on the economy. Projects that will improve traffic flow on Interstates 84 and 91, which are a part of the Primary Highway Freight System, are critical to enhancing the ability to move freight safely and efficiently through the Capitol Region. As such, improvements to the Charter Oak Bridge will support the economy of the immediate region, the State of Connecticut, and New England as a whole.

The Charter Oak Bridge is one of the priority investment strategies outlined in *Let's GO CT!*, Connecticut's bold 30-year transportation strategy. Improvements to the Charter Oak Bridge will transform Connecticut's transportation system by dramatically reducing travel times and traffic incidents as well as boosting the economy. CRCOG looks forward to continuing our partnership with CTDOT to cooperatively advance this effort and ensure its placement in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and CRCOG's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). We encourage you to approve INFRA funding for this critical freight improvement.

Sincerely,



Lyle D. Wray
Executive Director

cc: James Redeker, Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Transportation