June 02, 2013

Hon. Raymond LaHood
Secretary, United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We write to express our strong support for the replacement of the Portageville Bridge. It will create jobs for an area in desperate need for more employment and connectivity to the international economy.

With freight rail across the country poised to increase as this mode continues to become more fuel efficient and cost effective, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. This is one of the many reasons this project has broad support across affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials, and transportation agencies.

The Portage Bridge—a scenic marvel of engineering 245 feet above the Genesee River—was constructed in 1875 as a single-track viaduct. It is still operational, but restrictions prohibit efficient movement of goods along what is known as the Southern Tier route—Buffalo, Chicago and points west with Binghamton, New York City, and New England.

Through a public private partnership with Norfolk Southern Railway, the state and Norfolk Southern are joining local and regional leaders in leading the effort to assure New York’s future as a regional and global competitor. The project, with a $68 million price tag, will be made possible by the investments of many parties, including Norfolk Southern, Canadian Pacific, NYS DOT, and other entities.

Portage Bridge’s shortcomings also cause serious load and time constraints. With this project, load capacities would increase by 5%, 137 to 143 tons, and speeds raised over three times, from 10 to 35 mph, both major operating efficiencies. Despite the impediments, more than 200,000 carloads destined for points across the country traversed the bridge since 2010.
From repair and engineering data, it is quite clear that the Portage Bridge is fast approaching the end of its useful life and must be replaced soon. The bridge, however, cannot be closed before a replacement bridge is in place, as such a move would sever the Southern Tier and its customers relying upon domestic and international commerce. Many of the shortline railroads operating in the region rely on the Southern Tier route for access to the national rail network.

A new Portage Bridge will provide operational assurances for these railroads and the shippers who rely on them. Moreover, a new bridge will ensure that the route utilized by freight traffic traveling between points in the western United States and points in New England will remain intact for years to come. One of our railroads, the Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad, based in Scranton, Pennsylvania, receives approximately 4000 carloads per year of wheat destined to a flourmill in Mt. Pocono, Pennsylvania and another 1000+ carloads per year of miscellaneous traffic for other of our customers, all of which traverse the Portage Bridge.

Given these many public benefits, transportation network efficiencies, and improved market access for New York shippers, manufacturers, and consumers, we join together to support the efforts to replace the Portage Bridge.

Thank you for your fair consideration of the Portage Bridge replacement project, and we look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Gregory A. Cheshier
Vice-President of Operations
June 02, 2013

Hon. Raymond LaHood
Secretary, United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

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With freight rail across the country poised to increase as this mode continues to become more fuel efficient and cost effective, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. This is one of the many reasons this project has broad support across affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials, and transportation agencies.

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Given these many public benefits, transportation network efficiencies, and improved market access for New York shippers, manufacturers, and consumers, we join together to support the efforts to replace the Portageville Bridge.

Thank you for your fair consideration of the Portageville Bridge replacement project, and we look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

Raymond R. Martel
Vice President, CFO, General Manager

cc:: Ray Hessiger/NYSDOT

~ Safety and Service ~
The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We write to express our strong support for the replacement of the Portageville Bridge. It will create jobs for an area in desperate need for more employment.

With freight rail across the country poised to increase as this mode continues to become more fuel efficient and cost effective, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. The project has broad support in all affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials, and transportation agencies.

Through a public private partnership with Norfolk Southern Railway, the state and Norfolk Southern are joining local and regional leaders in leading the effort to assure New York’s future as a regional and global competitor. The project, with a $40 million price tag, will be made possible by the investments of many parties, including Norfolk Southern, Canadian Pacific, NYSDOT, and other entities.

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A new Portageville Bridge will provide operational assurances for these railroads and the shippers who rely on them. Moreover, a new bridge will ensure that the route utilized by freight traffic traveling between points in the western United States and points in New England will remain intact for years to come.

With these facts in mind, we support the efforts to replace the Portageville Bridge.

Thank you for your fair consideration of the Portageville Bridge replacement project, and we look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

Charlotte McAnulty
Customer Relations Specialist
May 31, 2013

Ray LaHood, Secretary
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We write to express our strong support for the replacement of the Portageville Bridge. It will create jobs for an area in desperate need for more employment.

With freight rail across the country poised to increase as this mode continues to become more fuel efficient and cost effective, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. The project has broad support in all affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials, and transportation agencies.

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A new Portageville Bridge will provide operational assurances for these railroads and the shippers who rely on them. Moreover, a new bridge will ensure that the route utilized by freight traffic traveling between points in the western United States and points in New England will remain intact for years to come.

With these facts in mind, we support the efforts to replace the Portageville Bridge.

Thank you for your fair consideration of the Portageville Bridge replacement project, and we look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

Nathan R. Fenno
President

NRF:ksp
May 30, 2013

Honorable Ray LaHood
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington DC 20590

Honorable Ray LaHood,

I write to express my strong support for the replacement of the Portageville Bridge. It will create jobs for an area in desperate need for more employment and connectivity to the international economy.

With freight rail across the country poised to increase as this mode continues to become more fuel efficient and cost effective, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. This is one of the many reasons this project has broad support across affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials and transportation agencies.

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Given these many public benefits, transportation network efficiencies and improved market access for New York shippers, manufacturers and consumers, I proudly support the efforts to replace the Portageville Bridge.

Thank you for your fair consideration of the Portageville Bridge replacement project, and we look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Assemblyman David J. DiPietro

DD/KS
Honorable Ray LaHood
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

Rail transportation and its infrastructure is a vital and necessary part of economic growth, particularly for its low-cost and efficiency. The replacement of the Portageville Bridge will create jobs for an area in desperate need for more employment and connectivity to the international economy.

With freight rail across the country poised to increase as this mode continues to become more fuel efficient and cost effective, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. This is one of the many reasons this project has broad support across affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials, and transportation agencies.

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A new Portageville Bridge will provide operational assurances for these railroads and the shippers who rely on them. Given these many public benefits, transportation network efficiencies, and improved market access for New York shippers, manufacturers, and consumers, I’ve joined together to support the efforts to replace the Portageville Bridge.

Thank you for your fair consideration of the Portageville Bridge replacement project, and we look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

Patrick M. Gallivan
Senator - 59th District

PMG:cut
June 4, 2013

Honorable Ray LaHood
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington DC 20590

Dear Honorable LaHood:

This letter is written to express support for the replacement of the Portageville Bridge. It will create jobs for an area in desperate need for more employment and connectivity to the international economy. With freight rail across the country poised to increase as this mode continues to become more fuel efficient and cost effective, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. This is one of the many reasons this project has broad support across affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials, and transportation agencies.

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A new Portageville Bridge will provide operational assurances for these railroads and the shippers who rely on them. Moreover, a new bridge will ensure that the route utilized by freight traffic traveling between points in the western United States and points in New England will remain intact for years to come. Given these many public benefits, transportation network efficiencies, and improved market access for New York shippers, manufacturers, and consumers, we join together to support the efforts to replace the Portageville Bridge.

Thank you for your fair consideration of the Portageville Bridge replacement project, and I look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

Ruth Hassell-Thompson
June 3, 2013

Honorable Raymond LaHood
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We write to express our strong support for the replacement of the Portageville Bridge. It will create jobs for an area in desperate need for more employment and connectivity to the international economy. We urge your consideration of TIGER V funds to be awarded to this project by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT).

With freight rail across the country poised to increase as this mode continues to become more fuel efficient and cost effective, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. This is one of the many reasons this project has broad support across affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials, and transportation agencies.

The Portageville Bridge—a scenic marvel of engineering 245 feet above the Genesee River—was constructed in 1875 as a single track viaduct. It is still operational, but restrictions prohibit efficient movement of goods along what is known as the Southern Tier route—Buffalo, Chicago and points west with Binghamton, New York City, and New England.

Through a public private partnership with Norfolk Southern Railway, the state and Norfolk Southern are joining local and regional leaders in leading the effort to assure New York’s and the region’s strength as a global competitor. The project, with a $68 million price tag, will be made possible by the investments of many parties, including Norfolk Southern, Canadian Pacific, NYS DOT, and other entities.
The Portageville bridge’s shortcomings also cause serious load and time constraints. With this project, load capacities would increase by 5%, 137 to 143 tons, and speeds raised over three times, from 10 to 35 mph, both major operating efficiencies. Despite the impediments, more than 200,000 carloads destined for points across the country traversed the bridge since 2010.

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Given these many public benefits, transportation network efficiencies, and improved market access for New York shippers, manufacturers, and consumers, we join together to support the efforts to replace the Portageville Bridge.

Thank you for your fair consideration of the Portageville Bridge replacement project for funding through USDOT’s TIGER V funds. We look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Senator Charles Fuschillo
Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
8th District

[Signature]
Senator Catharine M. Young
57th District
Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Railroad Authority
(formerly Monroe County Railroad Authority and Lackawanna County Railroad Authority)

Lawrence C. Malski, Esq.
President

Board of Directors
Robert C. Hay, Chairman
Dominic Kearing
Paul Canevari
Richard Kane
Greg Christine
Jerry Weinberger
Andy Forte
Dave Brojack

May 31, 2013

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

Please accept this as a letter of support for the replacement of the Norfolk Southern Portageville Bridge on the Southern Tier Mainline in New York State.

This vital mainline bridge was built in 1875 and is in need of replacement in order to allow the national and international rail commerce that traverses the route to continue safely and efficiently.

The freight commodities that must pass over this structure are vital to shippers and railroads in the entire northeast section of our country, including our 100 mile regional rail system in Northeast Pennsylvania where 25 active rail industries and thousands of jobs rely on reliable, safe and efficient rail service.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter of support for this vital project.

Sincerely,

Larry C. Malski
Lawrence C. Malski, Esquire
President

280 Cliff Street, Scranton, Pennsylvania 18503
Phone: 570-963-6676 Fax: 570-963-6718 lmalski@pnrra.org
June 19, 2013

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood,

I write in support of the New York State Department of Transportation’s (NYSDOT) application for funding from the TIGER V Grant Program through the U.S. Department of Transportation. This funding will be used for upgrades to the Portageville rail freight bridge in order to preserve and improve a vital commerce link between New York State and the rest of the country.

In order to complete this project, the NYSDOT has partnered with two Class I freight carriers, Norfolk Southern and Canadian Pacific, which will help to cover a majority of the project’s cost. The Portageville Bridge was constructed in 1875 as a single track viaduct, and is still operational, but has restrictions that prohibit efficient movement of goods along what is known as the Southern Tier route. The bridge, however, cannot be closed before a replacement is in place, as such a move would paralyze railroads and communities dependent on rail service along the Southern Tier. Last year, more than 100,000 carloads crossed the bridge, with origins and destinations in 22 states.

The requested funding will allow for the replacement of a freight bridge, allowing heavier vehicles to run the route and increase their transportation efficiency. The new bridge will ensure that the route can be used by vehicles at industry-standard weight so they no longer have to avoid the bridge, wasting time and fuel. This project will also provide an improved link between Binghamton and Buffalo, connecting the Northeast’s multiple major markets to Canada and the Midwest. This requested funding will allow for the completion of a major transit rehabilitation project that will connect millions of individuals over an improved transportation route, helping strengthen the region’s economy at a time when it is needed the most.

I ask that you please give this application your full consideration. If you have any questions, or desire further information, please do not hesitate to contact my staff member Andrew Usyk at (202) 224-4451.

Sincerely,

Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator
May 31, 2013

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary:

I am writing in support of the proposal submitted by the New York Department of Transportation (NYDOT) for the replacement of the Portageville Bridge through the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant Program.

The Portageville Bridge was constructed in 1875 as a single-track viaduct. It is still operational, but restrictions prohibit efficient movement of goods along what is known as the Southern Tier route—linking Buffalo, Chicago and points west with Binghamton, New York City, and New England.

Through a public-private partnership with Norfolk Southern Railway, the state and Norfolk Southern are joining local and regional leaders in the effort to ensure New York’s future as a regional and global competitor. The project, with a $68 million price tag, will be made possible by the investments of many parties, including Norfolk Southern, Canadian Pacific, NYS DOT, and other entities. The regions of New York most benefiting from this project are the Capital District, Greater Buffalo, Elmira-Chemung, Genesee, and Binghamton communities. This project has broad support among affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials, and transportation agencies.

This project would boost the economy of New York, generate jobs and increase business output. Given these many public benefits, transportation network efficiencies, and improved market access for New York shippers, manufacturers, and consumers, I applaud NYDOT for their foresight, and I sincerely hope the application meets with your approval.

Thank you for your consideration. If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Grants Director, Marissa Emanuel, in my Washington, DC office at 202-224-1766.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator

http://schumer.senate.gov
June 3, 2013

Mr. LaHood
USDOT Secretary
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary/Commissioner:

We write to express our strong support for the replacement of the Portageville Bridge. It will create jobs for an area in desperate need for more employment.

With freight rail across the country poised to increase as this mode continues to become more fuel efficient and cost effective, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. The project has broad support in all affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials, and transportation agencies.

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Many of the shortline railroads operating in the region rely on the Southern Tier route for access to the national rail network.

A new Portageville Bridge will provide operational assurances for these railroads and the shippers who rely on them. Moreover, a new bridge will ensure that the route utilized by freight traffic traveling between points in the western United States and points in New England will remain intact for years to come.

With these facts in mind, we support the efforts to replace the Portageville Bridge.

Thank you for your fair consideration of the Portageville Bridge replacement project, and we look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

Fulton J. Kennedy
June 18, 2013

The Honorable Raymond LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We write to you today in strong support of New York State Department of Transportation’s Portageville Bridge Replacement Project application submitted through the TIGER V discretionary grants program.

With freight rail usage on the rise across the country, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. One of their top priorities is the replacement of the Portageville Bridge – constructed in 1875 as a single track viaduct over the Genesee River. This bridge is an essential part of the Southern Tier route that connects Buffalo and Chicago with Binghamton, New York City, and New England. Norfolk Southern acquired this line segment from Conrail in 1999 and spends $240,000 annually to maintain the bridge, which has become a major chokepoint.

The 138-year-old bridge is quickly nearing the end of its useful life. It has been found to be both structurally deficient and operationally obsolete. Trains currently have to reduce speed to 10 miles per hour and cannot increase or accelerate again until the last car, sometimes a mile or longer away, have cleared the bridge. These are major impediments for the ten short line railroads and the two Class I railroads – Norfolk Southern and Canadian Pacific – that utilize this bridge each day.

In order to meet the demands of increasing rail usage, Norfolk Southern, Canadian Pacific, and NYSDOT will fund the majority of the project’s costs, $51.7 million of the estimated $68 million in total costs. Through this public-private partnership, freight shipper costs over the next 30 years are expected to decrease by $211 million, business output would increase by $447 million, and numerous local businesses would benefit in construction contracts. The in-depth economic analysis conducted last year that details this information also showed the bridge replacement project would lead to over 1,000 direct jobs and 1,000 indirect and induced jobs in the State of New York.

The replacement of the Portageville Bridge has been long-due. It is a critical piece of our national rail network that connects the Midwest with the Northeast. Given these many public
benefits, transportation network efficiencies, and improved market access for New York shippers, manufacturers, and consumers, we join together to support this application.

We thank you for your fair consideration of the Portageville Bridge Replacement Project and we look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across New York.

Sincerely,

CHRIS COLLINS
Member of Congress

ELIOT ENGEL
Member of Congress

CHRIS GIBSON
Member of Congress

PAUL TONKO
Member of Congress

SEAN PATRICK MALONEY
Member of Congress

RICHARD HANNA
Member of Congress

TOM REED
Member of Congress

DAN MAFFEI
Member of Congress
Hon. Raymond H. LaHood  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I write in support of the application by New York DOT and Norfolk Southern Corp. for a TIGER grant funding to replace the Portage Bridge in western New York.

This structure, built in 1875, crosses the Genesee River Gorge in Letchworth State Park. It is in immediate need of replacement – a project expected to cost well over $40 million. Should this bridge fail, the NS Southern Tier Line between Buffalo and Harrisburg would be severed. Our own interchange with NS at Hornell, NY, east of the Portage Bridge, would be severely impacted, putting the future of our own railroad at risk.

The 273,000 pound weight limitation on the Portage Bridge already restricts movement of 285,000 pound cars from the west. The weight limitation puts our own railroad at a competitive disadvantage and raises the transportation cost for our customers.

The future of rail service in New York State’s Southern Tier is at risk. I urge you to facilitate a TIGER grant for this critical infrastructure project.

Sincerely yours,

Eugene H. Blabey II  
Chairman/CEO

cc:: Ray Hessiger/NYS DOT

~ Safety and Service ~
June 1, 2013

Hon. Raymond H. LaHood  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I write in support of the application by New York DOT and Norfolk Southern Corp. for a TIGER grant funding to replace the Portage Bridge in western New York.

This structure, built in 1875, crosses the Genesee River Gorge in Letchworth State Park. It is in immediate need of replacement — a project expected to cost well over $40 million. Should this bridge fail, the NS Southern Tier Line between Buffalo and Harrisburg would be severed. Our own interchange with NS at Painted Post, NY, east of the Portage Bridge, would be severely impacted, putting the future of our own railroad at risk. The Southern Tier Line, along which this bridge is located, is the B&H’s critical link to Buffalo, NY and all points west.

The 273,000 pound weight limitation on the Portage Bridge already restricts movement of 285,000 pound cars from the west. The weight limitation puts our own railroad at a competitive disadvantage and raises the transportation cost for our customers.

The future of rail service in New York State’s Southern Tier is at risk. I urge you to facilitate a TIGER grant for this critical infrastructure project.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Carl P. Belke  
Sr. VP & COO

cc: Ray Hessinger/NYSDOT
June 10, 2013

Secretary Ray LaHood
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

On behalf of the 2,000 employer members of the Buffalo Niagara Partnership, I express strong support for the Portageville Bridge replacement project, a proposed public-private partnership between the State of New York and Norfolk Southern Railway, for which the state is seeking a TIGER V grant. The Portageville Bridge is a pivotal freight rail connection for New York State, and the Buffalo Niagara region.

Over the past two years, the Partnership’s Logistics Council has coordinated a host of regional stakeholders in trade and logistics toward the implementation of an International Trade Gateway in Buffalo Niagara. The Gateway would connect New York State with rapidly growing Canadian markets, and is widely viewed as one of our region’s best opportunities to foster economic growth and job creation. With the opening of its intermodal and automotive terminal in Mechanicville, Norfolk Southern will offer a competitive rail route from Buffalo Niagara to the Port of New York/New Jersey, as well as Boston and the New England markets.

Portageville continues to serve freight rail customers across the State but under severe operational restrictions and constant observation. It is approaching the end of its useful life as a freight rail carrying structure and is quickly deteriorating from both corrosion and fatigue. Deemed structurally deficient and operationally obsolete, the engineers maintaining the bridge are unable to state when the bridge will be permanently taken from service despite open concessions that the time for action on the bridge is now. Unless the bridge is replaced in the very near future a critical transportation corridor for our region will be lost.

Traffic traversing the Portageville Bridge is mixed but includes a large quantity of intermodal traffic serving market lanes between Chicago and New England, Canada, Buffalo and the Port of New York/New Jersey. Additional traffic relying on the bridge includes commodities for agricultural and mining activities, as well as supplies and shipments for local and national industries. Shortline railroads, Class 1 railroads, numerous manufacturers and agricultural suppliers, and industries requiring bulk commodities all rely on this route and this bridge. Unfortunately, speed and weight restrictions across the bridge are reducing the
competiveness of, and opportunity for, intermodal rail traffic causing a shift to our congested and deteriorating roadways.

As you consider applications for infrastructure projects seeking funding through the TIGER program, the Buffalo Niagara Partnership supports an application for funding the Portageville Bridge Project, producing immediate and direct effects on the economic activity and freight movement concerns of the region.

Sincerely,

Dottie Gallagher-Cohen
President & CEO
June 10, 2013

Secretary Ray LaHood
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

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Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dottie Gallagher-Cohen
President & CEO
June 2, 2013

Hon. Raymond LaHood
Secretary, United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We write to express our strong support for the replacement of the Portageville Bridge. It will create jobs for an area in desperate need for more employment and connectivity to the international economy.

With freight rail across the country poised to increase as this mode continues to become more fuel efficient and cost effective, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. This is one of the many reasons this project has broad support across affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials, and transportation agencies.

The Portageville Bridge—a scenic marvel of engineering 245 feet above the Genesee River—was constructed in 1875 as a single track viaduct. It is still operational, but restrictions prohibit efficient movement of goods along what is known as the Southern Tier route—Buffalo, Chicago and points west with Binghamton, New York City, and New England.

Through a public private partnership with Norfolk Southern Railway, the state and Norfolk Southern are joining local and regional leaders in leading the effort to assure New York’s future as a regional and global competitor. The project, with a $68 million price tag, will be made possible by the investments of many parties, including Norfolk Southern, Canadian Pacific, NYS DOT, and other entities.
Portageville’s shortcomings also cause serious load and time constraints. With this project, load capacities would increase by 5%, 137 to 143 tons, and speeds raised over three times, from 10 to 35 mph, both major operating efficiencies. Despite the impediments, more than 200,000 carloads destined for points across the country traversed the bridge since 2010.

From repair and engineering data, it is quite clear that the Portageville Bridge is fast approaching the end of its useful life and must be replaced soon. The bridge, however, cannot be closed before a replacement bridge is in place, as such a move would sever the Southern Tier and its customers relying upon domestic and international commerce. Many of the shortline railroads operating in the region rely on the Southern Tier route for access to the national rail network.

A new Portageville Bridge will provide operational assurances for these railroads and the shippers who rely on them. Moreover, a new bridge will ensure that the route utilized by freight traffic traveling between points in the western United States and points in New England will remain intact for years to come.

Given these many public benefits, transportation network efficiencies, and improved market access for New York shippers, manufacturers, and consumers, we join together to support the efforts to replace the Portageville Bridge.

Thank you for your fair consideration of the Portageville Bridge replacement project, and we look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Nicholson III
President and CEO
June 3, 2013

Hon. Raymond LaHood
Secretary, United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

Finger Lakes Railway (FGLK) writes to express our strong support for the replacement of the Portageville Bridge. It will create jobs for an area in desperate need for more employment and connectivity to the international economy.

With freight rail across the country poised to increase as this mode continues to become more fuel efficient and cost effective, the State of New York, through NYSDOT, is addressing critical freight rail bottlenecks across the transportation system. This is one of the many reasons this project has broad support across affected constituencies, businesses, elected officials, and transportation agencies.

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Portageville’s shortcomings also cause serious load and time constraints. With this project, load capacities would increase by 5%, 137 to 143 tons, and speeds raised over three times, from 10 to 35 mph, both major operating efficiencies. Despite the impediments, more than 200,000 carloads destined for points across the country traversed the bridge since 2010, including those to and from FGLK.
From repair and engineering data, it is quite clear that the Portageville Bridge is fast approaching the end of its useful life and must be replaced soon. The bridge, however, cannot be closed before a replacement bridge is in place, as such a move would sever the Southern Tier and its customers relying upon domestic and international commerce. Many of the shortline railroads operating in the region rely on the Southern Tier route for access to the national rail network.

A new Portageville Bridge will provide operational assurances for our railroad and the shippers who rely on us. Moreover, a new bridge will ensure that the route utilized by freight traffic traveling between points in the western United States and points in New England will remain intact for years to come.

Given these many public benefits, transportation network efficiencies, and improved market access for New York shippers, manufacturers, and consumers, we join together to support the efforts to replace the Portageville Bridge.

Thank you for your fair consideration of the Portageville Bridge replacement project, and we look forward to working with you to address the transportation needs across the Southern Tier.

Sincerely,

Michael V. Smith
President
May 30, 2013

Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Letter of support and certification for the New York State Department of Transportation’s Portageville Bridge Replacement Project TIGER Discretionary Grant Proposal

Dear Secretary LaHood:

Per the Notice of Funding Availability for the Department of Transportation’s National Infrastructure Investments (TIGER Discretionary Grants Program) under the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2013 as published in the April 26, 2013 edition of the Federal Register, this letter expresses the Genesee Transportation Council’s support for the New York State Department of Transportation’s Portageville Bridge Replacement Project in partnership with Norfolk Southern Corporation and Canadian Pacific Corporation.

The Genesee Transportation Council – as the designated metropolitan planning organization for the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region – recognizes the significant improvement to economic development and quality of life (consistent with the TIGER Discretionary Grants Program’s Primary and Secondary Selection Criteria) for the entire Genesee-Finger Lakes Region that would occur if the project is implemented.

Based on our understanding, Norfolk Southern has advanced the project to the point where all local, State, and Federal requirements will be met by June 30, 2014.

The Portageville Bridge Replacement Project is included in the adopted Long Range Transportation Plan for the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region 2035 and Transportation Strategies for Freight and Goods Movement in the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region (i.e., the region’s freight plan). The project would be added to the 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program as soon as possible upon selection by the U.S. Department of Transportation to receive an award through the TIGER Discretionary Grants Program.

Thank you for your strong consideration of the Portageville Bridge Replacement Project for the TIGER Discretionary Grants Program.

Sincerely,

Richard Perrin, AICP
Executive Director

cc: Hon. Mary Pat Hancock, Chairperson – Genesee Transportation Council
Joan McDonald, Commissioner – New York State Department of Transportation
Darrell L. Wilson, Assistant Vice President-Public-Private Projects – Norfolk Southern Corp.