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04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

April 14, 2014

The Honorable Anthony R. Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

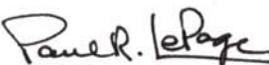
I am writing to express my strong support for the TIGER 2014 grant application submitted by the Maine Department of Transportation for funding to replace the Androscoggin River Bridge (ARB) that connects the towns of Mexico and Peru, Maine.

The ARB carries North Main Street over the Androscoggin River to link Mexico and Peru. Like many steel through-truss bridges built in pre-World War II era, it was originally constructed for smaller vehicles and to a lesser standard as a result. It now must accommodate much larger and heavier trucks serving the pulp and paper industries.

Constructed in 1930, the bridge is now 84 years old and at the end of its service life. To exacerbate matters, various steel members of the bridge have been subjected to collision damage over the years from large trucks, weakening the structure. The bridge is structurally deficient with a very narrow roadway and is currently posted at 25 tons. If not replaced, the bridge will continue to deteriorate, will have lower (lighter) load postings and will eventually have to be closed to traffic. This will have significant economic impacts on businesses in the region, and in particular, for the Irving Forest Products mill in nearby Dixfield. It will also impact commercial and emergency vehicles that would be forced to detour eight miles to the next nearest crossing.

The ARB in Mexico/Peru is in need of replacement. The new bridge would support the regional economy, small businesses and the forest products industry in particular. TIGER funding would complete the overall funding package. Please give your strong consideration to this project.

Sincerely,


Paul R. LePage
Governor



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