

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1902

May 12, 2015

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

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I write to express my support for the grant application submitted by the Maine Department of Transportation (Maine DOT) for the FY2015 TIGER Program to rebuild the Beals Island bridge. The Maine DOT will supply the necessary match funding for this grant.

The existing bridge was built in 1958, and is the only crossing that connects Beals Island with the mainland. It is structurally deficient, and was recently lowered to poor condition as a result of the deteriorating condition of its H-piles. The bridge has a width of 22 feet and has a length of 1,050 feet.

This project will help lower maintenance and repair costs, while improving safety and simplifying inspection. Upgrades will include more stable pilings, stronger barriers, and a curve and shoulder improvement that will allow for the accommodation of large trucks and reduce lane encroachments.

This bridge connects the towns of Beals and Jonesport, in the Downeast rural part of Maine. This project will provide jobs during construction, and through the use of local stones. Additionally, construction will minimally disrupt traffic flow.

Once complete, this will allow the community to grow by improving connection between the island and mainland, as well as access for oversized trucks. It will also limit the number of watercraft obstructions, critical since both small towns are heavily reliant on the fishing, lobster, and tourism industries. In fact, the improved pedestrian section will help for the annual lobster boat race, a major tourist event.

Thank you for your consideration of this application and my views.

Sincerely,


Bruce Poliquin