

LISA MURKOWSKI
ALASKA

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November 27, 2018

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing to express support for three Competitive Highway Bridge Program (CHBP) grant proposals from the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF). These proposals target the rehabilitation or replacement of bridges in Alaska which are listed in the National Bridge Inventory as “structurally deficient” or have otherwise outlived their service life. Please see pertinent details on each of the affected bridge projects within the enclosed fact sheets describing each grant proposal.

The CHBP is provided for under Division L of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-141) and intended to assist states with a population density of less than 100 people per square mile. Alaska’s transportation system generally lacks the redundancy which Lower 48 states enjoy and so many of our roadways serve as a “lifelines” in the truest sense. These bridge projects are critical to the transportation infrastructure, as well as the local economies of the Alaskan communities surrounding these vital, often exclusive, transportation links.

Thank you in advance to FHWA staff for their careful consideration of DOT&PF’s CHBP grant proposals. Consistent with all relevant rules, laws, and regulation, I respectfully request that all due consideration be given to all eligible Alaska-based applications. Thank you for the opportunity to bring these applications to your attention.

Sincerely,



Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator

United States Senate

November 30, 2018

The Honorable Elaine Chao
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

As you may know, the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has recently applied for federal grant funding under the Competitive Highway Bridge Program (CHBP). Our nation's transportation infrastructure is critical to this country's economic growth and our way of life, particularly in rural Alaska. The CHBP will provide flexibility from federal one-size-fits all mandates for several proposals put forth by Alaska's DOT&PF.

It is to my understanding that the DOT&PF proposals target the rehabilitation and replacement of bridges in Alaska that the National Bridge Inventory has listed as "structurally deficient." The bridges in need of repairs span from Eastern Alaska, to Ketchikan and to Seward where bridges are vital to connect rural communities.

So many of Alaska's roadways serve as lifelines in the truest sense. These bridge projects are critical to the transportation infrastructure, as well as the local economies of the Alaskan communities surrounding these vital, often exclusive, transportation links. For example, the bridge projects in Eastern Alaska will allow native communities to continue subsistence activities and provide safer travel for those who support the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System. In Seward, modernizing the Seward Highway, a critical transportation corridor, will provide a link for goods shipped from the Port of Alaska located in Anchorage. And in Ketchikan, communities rely on a dependable transit network to support tourism and fishing, which bolster the local economy.

I am honored to represent all Alaskans, and I ask that you give all due consideration to any Alaskan organization being considered for these grants. Thank you for considering funding this project, and consistent with all relevant rules, laws and regulations, I respectfully ask that all due consideration be given to this request.

Sincerely,



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator



United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
Mile 106.8 Richardson Hwy. P.O. Box 439
Copper Center, AK 99573-0439
907 822 5234 Fax 907 822 3281
<http://www.nps.gov/wrst>



IN REPLY REFER TO:

D30 (WRST-AD)

November 2, 2018

Commissioner Marc Luiken
3132 Channel Drive #300
Juneau, AK 99801-7898

Commissioner Luiken:

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve hosts an average of more than 70,000 visitors every year, and the majority of these users cross at least one of the bridges in the Eastern Alaska Rural Deficient Bridges Upgrade project. Under this project, three structurally deficient bridges, including two that are load-posted, will be replaced or rehabilitated. I write today in support of this project.

The Eastern Alaska Rural Deficient Bridge Upgrade project will enhance visitor safety and enjoyment of the resources in and around Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve. The road system supported by these bridges is a critical link for visitors to get access to the recreational, historic, and subsistence resources within the Park, as well as natural resources adjacent to the Park, including:

- Almost 15,000 square miles of designated wilderness area – America’s largest National Park.
- Both subsistence and personal use access to the Copper River salmon fishery, providing hundreds of thousands of pounds of food for Alaskan families.
- Tangle Lakes Archaeological District: 10,000 years of cultural history, with over 600 specifically identified sites of interest.
- Dozens of local businesses catering to the visitor trade, including hotels, lodges, and guides.

The importance of this corridor cannot be overstated when it comes to safety of Park visitors and our neighbors in the communities in the area. While the NPS has highly skilled Park Rangers ready to provide emergency assistance, any major medical event that takes place within the Park and Preserve will require evacuation to the closest hospital, and these roads and bridges are the vital land connection to help. In addition, load posted bridges are impediments to the free flow of equipment during the summer wildfire season.

Sincerely,



Ben Bobowski
Superintendent
Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

Alaska Trucking Association, Inc.

3443 Minnesota Drive · Anchorage, Alaska 99503 · Phone (907) 276-1149 · Fax (907) 274-1946

www.aktrucks.org

The authoritative voice of the trucking industry in Alaska

November 2, 2018

Commissioner Marc Luiken
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive #300
Juneau, AK 99801

To Whom it May Concern:

The Alaska Trucking Association (ATA) has served the Alaska trucking industry for over 60 years, and we know that trucking is the lifeblood of Alaska's everyday economy. Whether you are talking about keeping food in grocery stores during the winter or moving seafood inland to customers, commercial highway trucks are a vital link in Alaskan commerce. And commercial trucking depends on safe, unrestricted, and open roads to do our job.

For these reasons and on behalf of the 200 member company ATA, I support the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' grant application to the Federal Highway Administration for the Eastern Alaska Rural Deficit Bridge Upgrades Project. Funds for this project will be used to replace the Rock Creek and Gulkana Bridges and rehabilitate the Chokosna River Bridge, all three of which are in poor condition. The Chokosna River Bridge is also load-posted.

As you are aware, Alaska has many communities with only one access road, and detours are expensive, driving up costs for basic commodities. The Chokosna River Bridge is totally non-redundant, and detour lengths for Rock Creek and Gulkana are about 500 miles. Given how isolated these communities are, it is especially critical to plan improvements rather than wait for emergencies.

I appreciate the Department addressing the issue of load-posted bridges and looking ahead to avoid possible closures. I encourage the FHWA to approve your grant application and fund the Eastern Alaska Rural Deficit Bridge Upgrades Project.

Sincerely,



Aves Thompson
Executive Director





ASSOCIATED GENERAL CONTRACTORS of ALASKA

8005 SCHOON STREET, SUITE 100 • ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99518
TELEPHONE (907) 561-5354 • FAX (907) 562-6118

November 13, 2018

Commissioner Marc Luiken
Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities
P. O. Box 112500
Juneau, AK 99811-2500

Commissioner Luiken,

The Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Alaska is a construction trade association representing over 640 contractors, specialty contractors, suppliers and manufacturers in Alaska. For seventy years, we have represented the industry through many aspects that help support the overall economy of the State.

Alaska is both blessed and cursed by its geography: blessed by the abundant beauty and natural resources; cursed, because as a young state, our transportation system has many shortcomings. We offer strong support for the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' grant application to the Federal Highway Administration for the Eastern Alaska Rural Deficit Bridge Upgrades Project. As with so many places in Alaska, the existing roads in this region are either non-redundant or require detours of hundreds of miles in the event of closure.

Because these bridges are used by a relatively small number of people, they tend to score poorly against other transportation needs. But they provide a critical lifeline for Alaskans who use these historic roads for subsistence activities, as well as crews maintaining the Trans Alaska Pipeline.

On behalf of AGC of Alaska, our 640 members and our 70 years representing the industry, we urge the Federal Highway Administration to fully fund the Eastern Alaska Rural Deficit Bridge Upgrades Project.

Sincerely,

John MacKinnon, Executive Director
Associated General Contractors of Alaska

DON YOUNG
CONGRESSMAN FOR ALL ALASKA
WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2314 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
202-225-5765



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515
November 27, 2018

COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
CHAIRMAN EMERITUS

COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

REPUBLICAN
POLICY COMMITTEE

CANADA-U.S.
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

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

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Sincerely,


DON YOUNG
Congressman for All Alaska

Enclosures

CC: Sandra Garcia-Aline, Division Administrator, Alaska Division, FHWA
Brandye Hendrickson, Acting Federal Highway Administrator, FHWA
Marc Luiken, Commissioner, DOT&PF