



July 26, 2019

Secretary James H. Trogon III
North Carolina Department of Transportation
1501 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1501

Dear Secretary Trogon:

I am writing to offer the I-95 Corridor Coalition's support for the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT's) ***I-95 Resiliency and Innovative Technology Improvements Project*** application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's 2019 BUILD Program. The Project is a keystone of a much larger multi-year strategy to reconstruct North Carolina's transportation network to be safer and more resilient, utilizing state-of-the-art technologies to increase performance and accommodate current and future travel demands.

For more than 25 years, the I-95 Corridor Coalition has represented (now over 100) transportation agencies, toll authorities, and public safety organizations from Maine to Florida who keep people and goods moving throughout one of the world's busiest transportation corridors. The Coalition appreciates and endorses the proposed project, realizing that the benefits are not limited to a single jurisdiction or mode. The Project proposes to widen 27 miles of I-95 to eight (8) lanes, from Exit 13 to Exit 40 between Lumberton and Fayetteville and to raise two bridges near Lumberton and several low-lying portions of the road that are susceptible to flooding. It also includes state-of-the-art flood monitoring technology and expands the broadband infrastructure to manage evacuation routes in real time.

The I-95 Corridor Coalition shares North Carolina's vision of an efficient regional transportation system benefiting multiple modes, economics and jurisdictions. This project will be transformational for the performance of the transportation system, as well as the economy of eastern North Carolina, a region that has lagged the rest of the state's economic expansion.

The I-95 Corridor is critical to long-distance travel along the East Coast and is vital for local trips within North Carolina. This corridor is located along the eastern seaboard and has multiple river crossings. As such, it is vulnerable to flooding with its current design. During periods of evacuation, I-95 must be able to accommodate traffic from other states such as Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. In addition, the I-95 corridor is designated as part of the National Highway System (NHS) Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET). By reconstructing I-95 at its southern stretch in North Carolina to be more resilient, this BUILD Project directly responds to one of the recommendations of the state's *Hurricane Florence Recovery Recommendations* report, developed by the North Carolina State Office of Management and Budget at the direction of Governor Cooper.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to support the ***I-95 Resiliency and Innovative Technology Improvements Project*** and the NCDOT's application for federal BUILD grant funding to accelerate its construction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia G. Hendren".

Patricia G. Hendren, Ph.D.
Executive Director
I-95 Corridor Coalition