



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

DANIEL H. JOHNSON
SECRETARY

February 20, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington D.C. 20590

Subject: Letter of Financial Commitment - FY 2026 Grant Application for Rest area Expansion for Safe Transportation (REST) Project

To Secretary Duffy:

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) wishes to express its full support for Rest area Expansion for Safe Transportation (REST or “the Project”), submitted to USDOT’s 2026 BUILD program. The Project will restore and modernize the I-77 North Welcome Center in Surry County, North Carolina (NC) by adding 30 new freight truck parking spaces alongside a Truck Parking Information Management System (TPIMS) and additional traffic cameras to alert drivers of available parking spaces and dangerous road and weather conditions ahead. Additionally, REST will construct a new Welcome Center Facility to better meet the needs of both truckers and traveling families with upgraded amenities and improvements to the user experience that improve safety and convenience at the 3rd most visited Welcome Center in NC.

I-77 is a key commercial and tourism corridor that connects the southeast to major midwestern markets. Approximately 39,000 vehicles cross into NC from Virginia on I-77 daily; 33% of that traffic volume (13,420) are freight trucks transporting goods which are the backbone of NC’s economic vitality.

However, the corridor faces severe truck parking shortages, and freight truck drivers are often forced to park illegally on interstate ramps and shoulders to stay within federal Hours Of Service (HOS) regulations. This damages pavement, blocks emergency response, and creates hazards in an area already challenged by steep grades and harsh winter weather; particularly along on- and off-ramps that are high-conflict zones with limited sight distance.

Additionally, the corridor’s lack of freight truck parking reduces productivity and incurs additional costs for motor carriers; research from the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) shows that truckers regularly terminate trips or end their HOS regimen early to find scarce parking, forfeiting 56 minutes of drive time per day and costing approximately \$4,600 in lost compensation. Freight truck drivers who are unable to find safe parking are at greater risk of fatigue-related impairment, increasing safety risks for the traveling public. Indeed, according to the FMCSA, North Carolina was in the top 10 states for fatal truck-involved crashes between 2018-2022, and research shows that 10- 20 percent of all US truck crashes involve fatigued drivers. By expanding truck

Mailing Address:
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
1501 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH, NC 27699-1501

Telephone: 919 707-2800
Fax: (919) 733-9150
Customer Service: 1-877-368-4968

Website: www.ncdot.gov

Location:
1 SOUTH WILMINGTON STREET
RALEIGH, NC 27601

parking, REST will reduce crash risks and support the needs of truckers who are key to the state's economic competitiveness.

To that end, NCDOT will fund REST in the amount of \$15,000,000 in General Maintenance Reserve (GMR) funds.

Thank you for your consideration of the REST project for the FY 2026 BUILD grant program. If NCDOT can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at 919-418-5858 or via e-mail at mnewsome2@ncdot.gov.

Sincerely,

Signed by:



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Mark T. Newsome

Chief Financial Officer

North Carolina Department of Transportation