



PIEDMONT TRIAD
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Creative Regional Solutions
Executive Director • Matthew Dolge



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February 23, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), we are pleased to express our strong 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.

The application describes in detail the corridor’s lack of freight truck parking impact on productivity and safety. These requested improvements are critical to this corridor. 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 parking, REST will reduce crash risks and support the needs of truckers who are key to the state’s economic competitiveness.

The Piedmont Triad Regional Council is the lead regional organization for 12 counties that includes Surry County and the project site along I-77 and operates the Rural Transportation Planning Organization for the area. The normal project prioritization process to select funding for project improvements in the State Transportation Improvement Program would not easily accommodate this critical need for safety and we strongly support the request for BUILD grant funding for this project.

Thank you for your consideration of REST’s BUILD grant application to deliver essential improvements that support the motor carriers who keep our economy moving while modernizing one of the state’s most heavily visited rest areas.

Sincerely,

Jesse Day, Regional Planning Director
Piedmont Triad Regional Council