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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

October 31, 2017

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write to express strong support for the North Carolina Department of Transportation INFRA grant proposal for I-95/US 70 Innovative Technology and Rural Mobility Corridor Improvements. This investment in the infrastructure of Eastern North Carolina will have a long-lasting, positive impact on the economy, mobility, and safety of the region.

The I-95 section of the Project will increase safety, bring key portions of the facility into a state of good repair and up to current design standards, add capacity and increase the flow of traffic on this national artery in North Carolina. These improvements will ensure connections between the Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, military installations, and international ports on the eastern seaboard are maintained and enhanced.

The US 70 (future I-42) portion of the Project completes the last two remaining gaps between I-40 and the eastern terminus of the Havelock Bypass to bring the entire stretch of road up to freeway standards. This will be the culmination of a decades-long effort to develop this facility to serve Eastern North Carolina both economically and in times of need, as US 70 serves as an evacuation route during severe storms.

The plan to install the conduit and fiber backbone within the project's right of way along these portions of I-95 and US 70 will enable service within these critical corridors. This infrastructure improvement will provide capacity for current and future needs, allow for modernization of public safety centers, and provide the environment for connected and autonomous vehicles, among its many benefits.

While each component of the Project can stand alone, the greatest benefits are realized when the two investments are jointly made. The ITS features included in the Project would facilitate

detours when adverse circumstances close I-95 for hours at a time. The communications coverage provided with US 70 and I-95 could easily be extended to include the southern portion of US 117 between I-40 and US 70. Collectively, by wiring this “triangle” near the center of I-95 as it traverses the state, NCDOT would have the ability to analyze and manage traffic capacity in real time using the IT enhancements in response to crash and natural hazard events.

For these reasons, I strongly support the I-95/US 70 Innovative Technology and Rural Mobility Corridor Improvements project and the North Carolina Department of Transportation’s application for federal INFRA Grant funding to accelerate its construction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Walter B. Jones". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress