



North Carolina General Assembly
Senate

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November 8, 2017

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

Dear Secretary Trogdon:

On behalf of The State of North Carolina, I would like to express my support of the proposed 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.

Additionally, I think North Carolina needs to draw attention to the plight of the NC Port of Morehead City as a very important ancillary to the I-95/US 70 project.



Over several decades, the Morehead City Port has languished while Ports in Virginia and South Carolina have expanded greatly.

If North Carolina is to become a major player in international trade, we must seize this opportunity to have the Port of Morehead City become a major part of the conversation in the proposed I-95/US 70 Innovative Technology and Rural Mobility Corridor Improvements Project.

While each component of the Project can stand alone, the greatest benefits are realized when 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, we 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,


Louis M. Pate, Jr.

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