

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3308

July 22, 2026

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

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I am pleased to offer my strong support for the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) UWHARRIE Project (R-2527)—Widening of NC 24/NC 27 from NC 73 to the Troy Bypass (the "Project")—submitted to the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) 2026 Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) grant program.

The UWHARRIE Project will modernize approximately 8.25 miles of NC 24/27 in my district, located in Montgomery County, North Carolina, between NC 73 and the Troy Bypass. The Project will reconstruct the existing two-lane highway as a four-lane divided facility featuring a 46-foot depressed median, 10-foot paved shoulders, unsignalized Restricted Crossing U-Turn (RCUT) intersections, improved access management, replacement of the Norfolk Southern Railway bridge crossing, wildlife connectivity enhancements, and improvements to recreational access associated with Uwharrie National Forest. These improvements will work in tandem with the Troy Bypass (Project R-0623) to the east and planned improvements westward to Albemarle (Project R-2530B), creating a higher-capacity regional transportation corridor that improves mobility, safety, freight efficiency, and economic competitiveness across central North Carolina.

NC 24/27 serves as a critical east-west corridor supporting freight movement, manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, tourism, and regional economic activity. By addressing existing and future transportation demands, the Project will improve travel-time reliability, strengthen supply chain efficiency, enhance access to regional markets, and support long-term economic growth throughout Montgomery County and central North Carolina.

The Project also provides important benefits to federally managed lands and rural communities through improved access to Uwharrie National Forest, one of North Carolina's premier outdoor recreation destinations, which attracts approximately two million visitors annually. In coordination with the U.S. Forest Service, the Project includes trailhead parking improvements, accommodations for the Uwharrie Recreational Walking Trail, enhanced access for emergency response and forest

management operations, and wildlife connectivity enhancements. These investments will improve visitor access, support tourism-related businesses, reduce wildlife-vehicle conflicts, and preserve ecological connectivity within the Uwharrie landscape.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your favorable consideration of NCDOT's application. The UWHARRIE Project represents a transformative investment in rural transportation infrastructure that advances mobility, safety, economic competitiveness, environmental stewardship, and recreation access through a single, coordinated effort. NSFLTP funding will accelerate the delivery of this regionally significant Project and maximize benefits for residents, businesses, visitors, and the traveling public in North Carolina's Eighth Congressional District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mark E. Harris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "M" and "H".

Mark Harris
Member of Congress