



North Carolina General Assembly House of Representatives

REPRESENTATIVE RENÉE A. PRICE
50th District

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October 7, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590-001

Re: FY24-26 PROTECT Grant Program Application by the North Carolina Department of
Transportation for the NC Resilient Route Project

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I am writing to express my support for the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) application regarding the NC Resilient Route Project for a Resilience Improvement Grant under the FY 2024-2026 Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Discretionary Grant Program.

The grant funding will be used to improve the I-85 interchange with NC 86 in Orange County, North Carolina, including the replacement of the NC 86 bridge over I-85. The project is critical to the region, as the current NC 86 bridge has the lowest vertical clearance along the entire I-85 corridor in North Carolina, and it has been struck multiple times in the last decade, causing structural damage that has been expensive to repair. Further damage or closure of this bridge would cause severe disruption to the I-85 corridor for both passenger and freight travel.

The project would replace the nearly seventy-year-old functionally obsolete bridge with one that meets interstate standards and has a vertical clearance of 17.5-feet, ensuring safe and efficient travel for all types of vehicles. The project will also include ramp and roadway improvements at the I-85/NC 86 interchange to ensure that it meets future traffic demand.

I currently serve as the North Carolina Representative for House District 50, which includes the portion of Orange County where this critical improvement is proposed. Before my service in the General Assembly, I represented the people of Orange County for ten years on the Orange County

Board of Commissioners, giving me a deep, longstanding understanding of this community's needs and priorities. I have also called Hillsborough home for more than 30 years and have firsthand knowledge of the bridge and the recurring structural damage caused by vehicles becoming lodged beneath it. This is not an issue I know only through reports or constituent concerns—I have witnessed the problem over many years and understand the urgent need for a lasting solution that will improve safety, protect public infrastructure, and prevent continued costly damage.

For these reasons I am requesting your favorable consideration of this grant request by NCDOT for the NC Resilient Route Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Renee A. Price". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'R'.

North Carolina House of Representatives
District 50