

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 21, 2009

The Hon. Ray LaHood
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We write to urge the Obama Administration to support and prioritize federal funding to the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) project. Michigan needs it and needs it now, particularly as 10,000 construction jobs will be created as the project is built. Even more construction jobs would be available from the Canadian segment of the project.

The Detroit-Windsor border crossing on our nation's northern border is critical to the economies of Michigan and Ontario, and to their respective nations as it is the busiest and most valuable trade corridor in the world. Overall, this trade relationship supports 7.1 million U.S. jobs, 220,000 Michigan jobs, and one in three Canadian jobs.

The Detroit-Windsor border is one of the three U.S. land ports in Michigan serving as an international gateway and facilitating a combined annual freight volume of \$200 billion. Additionally, the Detroit-Windsor border is the leading overall international truck gateway facilitating annual trade valued at \$115 billion and carrying 25 percent of the trade value between the U.S. and Canada.

The Ambassador Bridge and the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel together carry 25 percent of total U.S.-Canada cross-border traffic. Because the Ambassador Bridge opened in 1930, its capacity is limited. The lanes are too narrow and its approach is too steep. According to a 2008 Brookings Institute study, these conditions "threaten to crimp trade and commerce, at a time when the region and both nations have tremendous shared stake in enhanced economic integration."

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, trucks trying to cross the Detroit-Windsor border waited in line for up to 12 hours. With no alternative transportation route available, traffic backed up for 15 miles, crippling commerce. A new crossing along the border would meet national security needs by guaranteeing an alternative route in emergency situations.

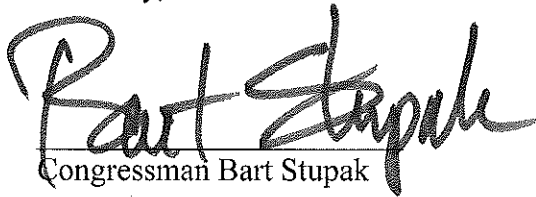
The DRIC would create this additional crossing to facilitate international travel. It is widely supported by state, local, and municipal governments in the United States and Canada, as the attachment to this letter attests. The Canadian government has appropriated \$1.34 billion for the construction of the project and has issued its environmental assessment with final approval expected in August 2009. Your agency

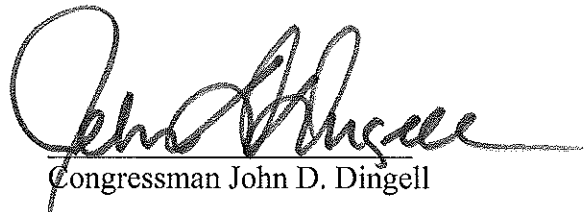
issued, in January 2009, a Record of Decision, the final step in the National Environmental Policy Act approval process. While the proposed bridge would be supported by a private-public partnership, the plaza and interchange projects must be federally authorized and funded at a total of \$440 million.

As the President seeks to fund construction projects to repair aging infrastructure and to stimulate the economy, we believe that the DRIC crossing along the Detroit-Windsor corridor will provide much-needed relief to border traffic and provide an economic boost to the state of Michigan. The secure and efficient flow of commerce across this corridor is paramount to continuing a vibrant and strong trade relationship with Canada.

We urge you to allocate funding to transition this critical northern border crossing into a modern, multi-modal system to create jobs, repair our infrastructure, and guarantee safe, secure, and efficient commerce across our northern border.

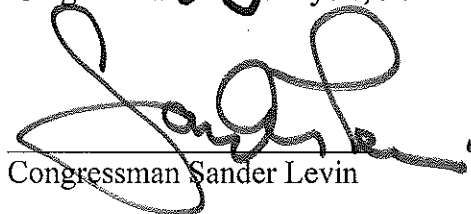
Sincerely,


Congressman Bart Stupak


Congressman John D. Dingell


Congressman John Conyers, Jr.


Congressman Dale E. Kildee


Congressman Sander Levin


Congressman Mark Schauer


Congressman Gary Peters


Congressman Fred Upton