



*Victoria F. Sheehan*  
Commissioner

**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



*William Cass, P.E.*  
Assistant Commissioner

October 16, 2017

Secretary Elaine L. Chao  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

Please find enclosed an application for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER 9) Discretionary Grant program. It is being submitted by the State of New Hampshire for the "*I-89 Lebanon-Hartford Bridge Project*" and requests \$10 million of Federal funds under the TIGER 9 program. This project will address major movement of freight, local multimodal transportation needs, and ensure the continued economic vitality of these two communities and the region.

The Interstate 89 Northbound and Southbound bridges over the Connecticut River between Hartford, Vermont, and Lebanon, New Hampshire, built in 1966, link these two communities and provide a critical major river crossing between the two states. These twin bridges are in poor condition due to their age and harsh northern climate. Their deterioration has progressed to the extent where they are now considered structurally deficient. This project will address the bridge's structural deficiency and improve travel reliability on this critical segment of the overall transportation network in the region.

These bridges are critical for the movement of people and goods locally, regionally and internationally. They carry Interstate-89, which is the major Boston to Montreal international trade route and serves to provide a junction to Interstate-91 and Interstate-93, which connect New England with the Canadian trade markets. The bridges and Interstate-89 also serve as a major connector to New England's major seaports and intermodal facilities. Without the bridges, freight traffic would need to detour 50 or more miles and rely on secondary highways, critically impeding the reliable transport of goods.

These bridges are also crucial to the connectivity, economic vitality, and quality of life for both New Hampshire and Vermont. Businesses in the area utilize these bridges daily to facilitate delivery of goods and services throughout the region. The bridges serve as a link to the downtown areas of Lebanon, New Hampshire and White River Junction, Vermont for retail, tourism, and service industries. This project will address regional transportation needs, and ensure the continued economic well-being of these two communities and the region.

The project is consistent with state of good repair plans for both NHDOT and VTrans, and appears in New Hampshire's approved Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan and Vermont's State Transportation Improvement Program.

You can find letters of support for the project, grant attachments, and additional information on the bridge inspections and public involvement to date on our webpage at <https://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/lebhart16148/index.htm>.

It is important to note that New Hampshire receives the lowest total annual federal apportionment of all the States for transportation, therefore investing in larger projects such as this one limits the Department's ability to address smaller structurally deficient bridge projects across the state. This project will help maintain and enhance the quality of life for the area residents and promote economic development, making it extremely important to the State. The Department is also committing a sizeable portion of non-federal funds to the project to leverage the requested TIGER grant for this project. The Department does anticipate utilizing some GARVEE bonds to fully fund construction. The TIGER grant would be a significant boost towards accomplishing this much needed project, as it would reduce the need for bonding and consequently lower the overall project cost for the State.

New Hampshire is grateful for the opportunity to submit this application and appreciates the consideration of the U.S. Department of Transportation. We look forward to hearing from you upon completion of the review process.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Victoria F. Sheehan".

Victoria F. Sheehan  
Commissioner  
NH Department of Transportation

Secretary Joseph Flynn, VTrans