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AUGUSTA, MAINE  
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage  
GOVERNOR

April 1, 2016

The Honorable Anthony R. Foxx  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I am writing again this year to express my strong support for the TIGER 2016 Grant application submitted by the Maine Department of Transportation for funding to replace the Beals Island Bridge that connects the Towns of Beals and Jonesport, Maine.

The Beals Island Bridge was built in 1958 and is the only crossing that connects Beals Island and the Town of Beals with the mainland at Jonesport. While the latest report of this bridge had listed its condition as fair, a recent inspection lowered that rating to poor due to deterioration taking place at an accelerated rate. Because of this, the bridge is now classified as structurally deficient, which poses critical problems for residents on both sides.

The two towns affected by this bridge have strong connections and dependency on the lobster and fishing industries, with working waterfronts present on both sides. Tourism is also an important industry for these two communities. A new bridge would mean a wider roadway and shoulders to accommodate more users, including buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians. It would ensure safe passage to and from the island as well as access to the U.S. Coast Guard station which sits at the NW corner of the bridge.

The cost for this project is estimated at \$22.5 million. MaineDOT is seeking a TIGER grant in the amount of \$12.6 million. The Beals Island Bridge needs to be replaced. The new bridge would support the regional economy, small businesses and the fishery in particular. TIGER funding would complete the overall funding package, and I urge you to give your strong consideration to this project.

Sincerely,

  
Paul R. LePage  
Governor



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