

*127th Legislature*  
*Senate of*  
*Maine*  
*Senate District 6*

*Senator David C. Burns*  
*3 State House Station*  
*Augusta, ME 04333-0003*  
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April 4, 2016

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

Re: TIGER Grant Request for the Replacement of the Beals Island Bridge in Jonesport-Beals, Maine

Dear Secretary Foxx,

I am writing to express my support for the TIGER Grant application request submitted by the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT). The Department is requesting the grant for the replacement of the Beals Island Bridge, which serves as the only connection between the island and town of Beals with the mainland at Jonesport. It is a critically important piece of infrastructure.

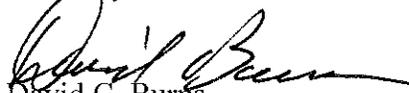
As the State Senator representing Washington County, where this bridge is located, I can attest to the important role it serves. Both Beals Island and Jonesport have small populations and villages with strong connections and a dependency on the lobstering and fishing industry, as well as on tourism. They depend upon the Beals Island Bridge for their livelihood and it is vital that we ensure they are reaching their destinations safely.

The existing bridge was constructed in 1958 and its substructure has been rated to be in poor condition. Further, the bridge itself is classified as structurally deficient. It is clear that a long-term solution is necessary and a new bridge is the best option.

According to MDOT, the total estimated project cost of a new bridge is 22.5 million. The project is partially funded in the current MDOT Work Plan, with 9.9 million programmed for construction in 2016/17. Some of the advantages of a new bridge include improved mobility, lower maintenance and repair costs, enhanced durability, increased safety, and simplified inspections.

I urge you to approve this grant request. Do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



David C. Burns  
State Senator