

United States Senate

January 23, 2024

The Honorable Shailen Bhatt
Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Administrator Bhatt:

I write in support of Mercer County's application for gap funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Bridge Investment Program (BIP), for bridge projects up to \$100 million. The County's *Lincoln Avenue Bridge Replacement Project* will include the construction of a new bridge in Trenton, New Jersey, over Amtrak's Northeast Corridor Rail Line, an inactive rail yard, and Assunpink Creek, which is a tributary of the Delaware River.

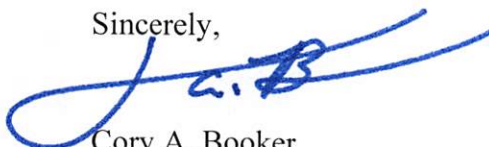
The Lincoln Avenue Bridge is located in the capital city of Trenton, New Jersey's tenth most populated city, with upwards of 90,000 residents. This 687-foot bridge was built in 1931 and is both the longest bridge and one of the oldest bridges owned by Mercer County. Currently in a state disrepair, the bridge has exposed, rusted steel in the girders and floor beams, as well as concrete spall breaking off.

This bridge transports Amtrak's electrical catenary, gas mains, and electrical and communication conduits. Bridge failure would hinder connectivity for Trenton residents and visitors, and cause disruptions for Amtrak and New Jersey Transit commuter rail service.

Mercer County estimates the current cost of replacing the Lincoln Avenue Bridge is \$38 million. FHWA BIP funding will provide gap funding to pay for the remaining \$20 million of the project that is not covered by the previously allocated state and federal funds. The Lincoln Avenue Bridge Replacement Project will enhance safety, boost connectivity, and upgrade an essential commuter rail line vital to the county, state, and region. This multimodal project will directly benefit the local Trenton community who commutes via bicycle or on foot, as well as those who utilize Amtrak's Northeast Corridor Line, the biggest passenger rail corridor in the country.

I ask that you give all due consideration to this grant application, and I thank you in advance for your attention to this important project. Should you have any questions, please contact me or my staff at (973) 639-8700.

Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator