



April 6, 2017

The Honorable Walter B. Jones
U.S. House of Representatives
2333 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Jones:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Town Council and the residents, property owners, business owners, and visitors to the Town of Duck to transmit a resolution adopted by the Town Council on March 1, 2017, in support of the Mid-Currituck Bridge Project. Specifically, I am writing to request any assistance that you may be able to offer to assist in the issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD) for the project by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The Mid-Currituck Bridge has been contemplated for nearly thirty years. As the North Carolina Turnpike Authority has stated in the Mid-Currituck Bridge Study FEIS Fact Sheet:

"N.C. 12 serves as the only highway corridor to the Currituck County Outer Banks. Due to high existing and future travel demand, there is a substantial need to improve traffic flow on the project area's thoroughfares (U.S. 158 and N.C. 12) and reduce travel time between the Currituck County mainland and the Currituck County Outer Banks. Evacuation times from the Outer Banks along U.S. 158 and N.C. 168 must also be reduced. The Mid-Currituck Bridge will improve mobility and road capacity within the project study area by providing an alternative route to and from the Currituck County Outer Banks."

The draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Mid-Currituck Bridge was completed in March 2010 and the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was completed in January 2012. The project is now in the North Carolina 2016-2025 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) awaiting the ROD, originally expected this spring, with construction beginning shortly thereafter. Due to the time that has elapsed since its release, the Final EIS is undergoing a re-evaluation that will determine if there is any information that was not considered in the original document. The Town is hopeful that this re-evaluation will conclude that the information in the Final EIS is accurate and that the ROD will be published.

Recently, the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC), along with the group calling itself "No Mid-Currituck Bridge" and the North Carolina Wildlife Federation have stepped up their efforts to derail the project. In a letter from the SELC to North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Secretary Trogden, the organization challenges the Final EIS and presents what it purports to be an effective, less invasive and cheaper alternative than the Mid-Currituck Bridge.

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It is the Town's position that the letter and the report are classic examples of one-sided advocacy with the goal of delaying the issuance of the ROD and ultimately killing the project by delaying it as long as possible. With the exception of the traffic projections, which have changed, although not in the Town's opinion to the degree that would negate the need for the Mid-Currituck Bridge, neither the SELC letter or the Walter Kulash report (Mr. Kulash is a transportation planning consultant hired by the SELC) with suggested alternatives to the bridge contain any significant information that has not been previously and thoroughly evaluated. Further, it is unfortunate that a decision was made to release a report impacting the lives and livelihoods of the residents, property owners, business owners, and visitors to the Town without first seeking input from those impacted by the alternatives recommended in it.

Congressman Jones, thank you for your attention to this matter. I, the Town Council, and the entire Town of Duck, appreciate any assistance you may be able to provide as we continue to advocate for the construction of Mid-Currituck Bridge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Donald P. Kingston', written in a cursive style.

Donald P. Kingston
Mayor

Enclosure

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF DUCK, NORTH
CAROLINA, SUPPORTING CONSTRUCTION OF THE MID-CURRITUCK BRIDGE AND
ITS CONTINUED INCLUSION IN THE STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT
PLAN

Resolution #17-02

WHEREAS, the Mid-Currituck Bridge project has been in the development process for over twenty-five years; and

WHEREAS, the popularity of Outer Banks of North Carolina, including Dare County and its towns, Currituck County and the Town of Duck, continues to grow, resulting in an ever increasing number of residents and visitors to the Outer Banks, particularly the northern Outer Banks; and

WHEREAS, the Outer Banks of North Carolina generates substantial revenue for the State of North Carolina, particularly through tourism, and also serves a role as an ambassador area for the State by introducing hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the United States and the world to the many wonders of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, this revenue and the goodwill that visitors feel towards the Outer Banks and North Carolina is tested annually through frustrations attributed directly to traffic congestion; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Mid-Currituck Bridge is to substantially improve traffic flow on the project area's thoroughfares, i.e. NC 12 and US 158, substantially reduce travel time for persons traveling between the Currituck County mainland, Dare County and Currituck County Outer Banks; and

WHEREAS, another purpose of the Mid-Currituck Bridge is to substantially reduce the hurricane clearance time for residents and visitors who use US 158 and NC 168 during coastal evacuation; and


WHEREAS, building the Mid-Currituck Bridge will reduce congestion and alleviate delays, thus promoting and enhancing economic development, while bolstering the tourism industry; and

WHEREAS, alternatives to the Mid-Currituck Bridge project have been studied thoroughly and have been rejected in favor of the Mid-Currituck Bridge; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the viability and need of the Mid-Currituck Bridge, the North Carolina Department of Transportation has demonstrated a commitment to construction of the bridge by securing funding and including the project in the State Transportation Improvement Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF DUCK, NORTH CAROLINA, THIS 1ST DAY OF MARCH, 2017, that it reaffirms its commitment to the Mid-Currituck Bridge project and advocates for advancement of this crucial project and its continued inclusion as a funded project in the State Transportation Improvement Plan.

Adopted this 1st Day of March, 2017



Mayor

ATTEST:



Town Clerk

