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Senate of Pennsylvania

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January 24, 2023

The Honorable Josh Shapiro, Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
225C Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Shapiro:

Congratulations on your sweeping electoral success. While your victory was achieved for many reasons, we believe Democrats, Republicans and Independents closed ranks behind your candidacy because of your commitment to leading Pennsylvania through bipartisan planning and regional cooperation.

It is in this spirit that we urge your administration to consider the extraordinary value associated with completing the long-delayed Mon-Fayette Expressway as proposed.

The bipartisan infrastructure bill signed into law by President Joe Biden creates a unique opportunity to fast-track work on the last leg of the Mon-Fayette Expressway. The final piece of the road – crossing the Monongahela River in Duquesne and linking to the Parkway in Monroeville – is now being scheduled but has been plagued by delays due to funding gaps which still have not been fully addressed.

Started more than four decades ago, the project has been mired in bumper-to-bumper bureaucracy throughout its history, but it is already showing its promise for the region. That success only fuels continued frustration over the current schedule that may not see final completion for another generation. This frustration is bipartisan and permeates many layers of local government throughout the region.

The completion of 54 miles of highway has created an economic resurgence along its path, attracting manufacturing, tourism, and many other businesses along its length. Chevron, Boeing, Johnson Matthey and numerous natural gas entities are using the existing highway for their growing operations. However, continued progress remains stymied by the failure to move forward on completing the final 13 miles, thus leaving unfinished an economic superhighway connecting multimodal transportation routes throughout the region.

The southern section of the Mon Fayette's connection to Interstate 68 and the greater Morgantown network has increased the region's attraction for economic investment. Unfortunately, commerce and tourism using the existing roadway run into a wall of traffic lights and reduced speed as they approach Pittsburgh and its burgeoning suburbs.

With the elements in the new federal bill, lawmakers have it within their means to significantly reduce the wait and build confidence that government can deliver a massive project for the common good.

The Mon-Fayette project is paid for by proceeds from the Oil Franchise Tax, but work cannot be started until sufficient funds are accumulated to pay for construction. While this pay-as-you-go method ensures that the road will eventually be constructed, it results in delays as tax revenues are collected.

Now with the pandemic, fuel-efficient automobiles, and the switch to electric vehicles threatening the franchise tax, there is even more uncertainty about how long it will take to generate the necessary funds. That is why it is essential that the Turnpike tap a new funding source to bolster revenues and close funding gaps.

We speak for colleagues on both sides of the aisle – and at all levels of government – when we urge you to meet with us to gain a better understanding of the opportunities that the completion of the Mon-Fayette Expressway offers for our region and our commonwealth.

Sincerely,



Senator Jim Brewster
45th Senatorial District



Senator Jay Costa
43rd Senatorial District



Senator Wayne Fontana
42nd Senatorial District



Senator Devlin Robinson
45th Senatorial District



Senator Pat Stefano
32nd Senatorial District



Senator Lindsey Williams
38th Senatorial District

Cc: The Honorable Austin Davis, Lieutenant Governor, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Senator Wayne Langerholc, Chair, PA Senate Transportation Committee
Senator Marty Flynn, Minority Chair, PA Senate Transportation Committee
Senator David Argall, PA Senate Transportation Committee
Senator Camera Bartolotta, PA Senate Transportation Committee
Senator Rosemary Brown, PA Senate Transportation Committee
Senator John Kane, PA Senate Transportation Committee
Senator Timothy Kearney, PA Senate Transportation Committee

Senator Greg Rothman, PA Senate Transportation Committee
Senator Elder Vogel, PA Senate Transportation Committee
The Honorable Michael Carroll, Acting Secretary, PA Department of Transportation
Mark P. Compton, Chief Executive Officer, Pennsylvania Turnpike
Craig R. Shuey, Chief Operating Officer, Pennsylvania Turnpike
Commissioner Wadud Ahmad, Chair, Pennsylvania Turnpike
Commissioner William Lieberman, Vice Chair, Pennsylvania Turnpike
Commissioner Sean Logan, Secretary-Treasurer, Pennsylvania Turnpike
Commissioner Pasquale Deon, Pennsylvania Turnpike
Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission