

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 7, 2016

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx,

We write to urge the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to approve North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) application and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to designate U.S. Highway 264 between I-87 in Zebulon, North Carolina, and the Greenville Bypass in Pitt County, North Carolina, as a High Priority Corridor and Future Interstate. The application was submitted by the Governor of North Carolina on September 7, 2016. The request made by the state closely follows the Eastern North Carolina Gateway Act that we introduced in the House of Representatives and the Senate as H.R. 6105 and S. 3378, and would help achieve our long-term vision for the transportation future of Eastern North Carolina.

If approved, this Future Interstate would connect Eastern North Carolina with Interstate 95, Virginia, South Carolina, and the rest of the Eastern Seaboard. The proposal would form a logical spur off of Interstate 795 near Wilson, North Carolina and would provide Interstate access to Greenville, North Carolina. Greenville is currently the largest metropolitan area in North Carolina without a connection to an Interstate in its vicinity. The City of Greenville serves as a regional hub for education, healthcare, and business, and is projected to grow steadily through coming decades. A Future Interstate along U.S. Highway 264 would help meet the infrastructure needs of the growing region.


Importantly, this Future Interstate can be accomplished in the near future as NCDOT has committed to completing it within 25 years. Many portions of U.S. Highway 264 are already built to Interstate standards. Consequently, upgrading the entire route to become a Future Interstate would be cost-effective and build on existing infrastructure. By approving this application and signing an MOU with the state, we can work in partnership with NCDOT to prioritize upgrading this route and boost Eastern North Carolina's regional economy.

Letter to Secretary Foxx
November 7, 2016
Page 2

The FHWA and U.S. Department of Transportation have an opportunity to better connect Eastern North Carolina with surrounding states and the Eastern Seaboard in the near future and at no cost to American taxpayers. By approving the application and signing the MOU, you can continue your legacy of improving transportation in your home state. We urge the FHWA to approve this request before the current Administration leaves office. This proposal will benefit Eastern North Carolinians by helping to connect all Americans with all that the region has to offer. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,


Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress


G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Gregory G. Nadeau, Administrator, FHWA
The Honorable John Sullivan, Division Administrator, FHWA
Mr. Bud Wright, Executive Director, AASHTO