

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 29, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

We write to express our support for the Vermont Agency of Transportation's (VTrans) application for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (CDFA #20.938). We are pleased to bring this proposal to your attention.

The Readsboro Bridge is a critical structure that enables travel along a major route in rural southern Vermont. Built in the 1950s, the bridge is in poor condition and needs to be replaced. The design for the proposed structure incorporates historic preservation features to preserve the character of the bridge and to match its surroundings. It will include wider sidewalks for pedestrians, which will enable accessible pedestrian travel while reducing vehicle traffic – which will help move Vermont toward its greenhouse gas reduction requirements. Furthermore, funds will allow VTrans to improve drainage and setbacks to ensure that the bridge can withstand weather events, which are increasing in frequency and intensity as demonstrated by recent catastrophic flooding in the state. Lastly, replacing the bridge will allow the Town of Readsboro to upgrade water lines to modernize its municipal infrastructure, as a town-owned water line is currently supported on the existing structure.

VTrans has completed design and the project is ready to go to construction. The risks of not replacing the bridge expeditiously are high. Any bridge failure could result in significant commuter and freight traffic detours of up to 32 miles, consequential impacts to mobility within Readsboro and the region, and inaccessibility for public transit and emergency response services.

We appreciate you giving this application the serious consideration it deserves. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can provide further evidence of our support.

Sincerely,



BERNARD SANDERS
United States Senator



PETER WELCH
United States Senator



BECCA BALINT
United States Representative