

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 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 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Grant Program (CDFR #20.933) for the replacement of the Quechee Gorge Bridge. We are pleased to bring this proposal to your attention.

Built in 1911, the Quechee Gorge Bridge is Vermont's oldest surviving steel arch bridge, and extends U.S. Route 4 across the state's deepest gorge in Hartford, Vermont. The bridge is located along the National Highway System and serves as a major east-west highway linking Vermont to central New Hampshire and central New York, as well as various towns and cities in southern and central Vermont. In addition to serving as a major regional freight corridor, U.S. Route 4 is also the major gateway to a large tourist region in Windsor County, including the Quechee area. The bridge itself is a major tourist destination and attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors annually to view the gorge and the Ottaquechee River, flowing 165 feet below.

The requested funding will support a major rehabilitation project to replace the Quechee Bridge. VTrans has completed the design, and construction has recently begun. The risks of not replacing the bridge expeditiously are high. Any bridge failure could result in significant commuter and freight traffic detours, consequential impacts to mobility within Quechee and the region, and inaccessibility for public transit and emergency response services. The project will include the addition of protective barriers that will allow for accessible pedestrian travel and reduce vehicle traffic, supporting Vermont's greenhouse gas reduction requirements.

Thank you for giving this application the careful consideration it deserves. If we can provide further evidence of our support for this proposal, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



BERNARD SANDERS  
United States Senator



PETER WELCH  
United States Senator



BECCA BALINT  
United States Representative