

July 5, 2018

Elain Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am writing today to offer the full support of the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce, for the federal BUILD Grant application that is being jointly submitted by the towns of Haddam and East Haddam, Connecticut.

The Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce is a dynamic business organization with over 2,175 members that employ over 50,000 people. It represents every industry sector and businesses of all sizes, from Fortune 500 companies to micro businesses, and is committed to promoting a positive business climate in Middlesex County and in Connecticut.

We are proud to count Haddam and East Haddam as two of our key member towns. We believe that the Federal BUILD grant will help connect these two classic New England towns through the construction of a sidewalk on the historic Swing Bridge over the Connecticut River. Not only will the new pedestrian walkway better connect tourists and residents to nearby attractions such as the Goodspeed Opera House and the Essex Steam Train and Riverboat, it will also provide better access to the riverfront on both sides and will increase the safety of everyone who frequents the area. Thanks to the strong leadership of local officials, the area around the Swing Bridge is on the verge of major infrastructure improvements and economic development successes. On the Haddam side, work has begun to bring clean water to the Tylerville area of town which is a key commercial corridor. Sidewalks are also being installed on Bridge Road which is adjacent to the Swing Bridge. The area around the Goodspeed Opera House on the East Haddam side of the bridge, a major tourist area, is ripe for strategic development after the town recently moved some of its facilities to a different part of East Haddam. This entire area has the potential to be major tourist destination in our state, while maintaining the small town New England feel for which it is known.

In closing, I want to reiterate the support of the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce for this BUILD application. An infusion of federal funds into this key area of Middlesex County will help us improve the region from an economic standpoint, and from a public safety one. The chamber looks forward to being a strategic partner as this important process moves forward.

Sincerely,



Larry McHugh
President