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**House of Representatives**  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Harrisburg

January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Secretary Michael Carroll  
PA Department of Transportation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North St., Eighth Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: State Route 0080 Section 17M  
Reconstruction Project  
Stroudsburg Borough, Monroe County

Secretary Michael Carroll,

Thank you for the email that I was expecting. The rubber stamp. A couple of things strike me as not necessarily true, but please, correct me if I am wrong. Are you saying that if you scale the project back, then it won't be funded by the Federal Government? I find that odd, since we asked that question to all of the authorities years ago, and the answer was you could scale it back and still get Federal dollars. You could use that money to fix Rt. 611 or Rt. 191 and this project started off as \$100 million dollars 15 years ago, and now, based on your letter, it is nearly \$700 million dollars? Also, much has changed since you began this project, such as the Bartonsville Exit, a commuter train that is one step from happening relieving over 400,000 cars off of our roads. A 2009 traffic study and it's 2024? You absolutely can scale this back and get the money. The money to do the right things, instead of a design that will be obsolete by 2032, which is in your own report. It is a little odd to me to say that if you scale it back, it will cost more money.

Next, Drehr Avenue is a crucial exit and the thousands of households that will no longer have access to the highway will be an emergency nightmare. Our own EMS have stated this and the EMS coordinator from Stroudsburg testified about this at the town hall.

As for your environmental assessments... you have not even filed any permits to see if it is environmentally sound to do the extra lanes and fly over exit. I know this, because I spoke with the DEP. Once you file the permits, it is at least a year for them to do the science and see if it complies, public hearings, etc.. Based on the letter and public testimony in 2019 from the Brodhead Water Shed and PennFuture, we will have huge environmental impacts from the additional lanes and are prepared to move forward to protect our waterways, which have

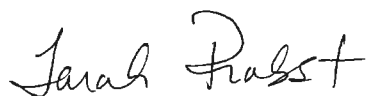
exceptional value status. So, just a scenario, if the DEP says that you have to scale back because of this, would the Federal Government cut the funding like you claim in your letter? I don't think so. You have not even met with the Monroe County Conservation District about this, I mean, shouldn't this have been something that good Government does?

You mentioned that you scaled the project back significantly. You had to, because our task force had to remind you of Federal Law with public housing and historical graveyards, that was because of our task force. You also had to scale back because of the underground rock matter that failed in infiltration, not because you wanted to take "less" properties.

We have been on this project for 8 years and you are right, my passion is deep, but my constituents in all of the surrounding areas passions are deeper and there are 1500 signatures that we received in less than 36 hours to scale this project back. We will not be silent, we will not sit back and watch the destruction of our area and creating a bottleneck that does not exist in Stroudsburg as we speak. Your priorities do not align with The Federal Highway Administration guidelines, you are not properly following them when it comes to our urban status, our watersheds and the only section of 310 miles of I-80 in Pennsylvania that splits our town in half. You are supposed to mitigate ANY plans that disrupt our county seat. This is an outdated design, you are already 7 years behind schedule and we are asking you to not do the third lane and keep the Drehr Ave. exit only. That is it. 85% of the project is fine, the upgrades to bridges and the 12 foot shoulders are indeed needed.

We will continue the fight and watching for every permit you apply for. That is when we will and can take action. Look, when it is all said and done, I respect the PennDOT workers so much, what would we do without them, but I am asking for the design team to re-evaluate a design that is devastating to our area. I have been trying for 7 years as the Mayor and now as a State Representative. Please do the right thing and give people a reason to believe in good Government. That is my plea.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tarah Probst". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Representative Tarah Probst