



For Immediate Release:

January 18, 2018

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Delaware Riverkeeper Network Releases Letter to Rep. Quinn

Letter Urges Her to Support Bridge Rehabilitation

Doylestown, PA – The Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) published an open letter in a local Bucks County newspaper addressed to Representative Marguerite Quinn urging her to take a stance supporting rehabilitation of the Headquarters Road Bridge. The letter was also delivered to the representative via email to ensure receipt.

In part, the letter reads:

“This bridge is in your district. As a member of the House transportation committee, there are many things you could do to get PennDOT to drop its impractical plan and rehabilitate the bridge, but you’ve inexplicably done none of them. Hundreds of your constituents have asked you to take action to get the bridge reopened as soon as possible. You claim to support them but have still done nothing to promote the only viable solution. Other than to simply defer to PennDOT, you’ve offered no explanation for your inaction.”

DRN has been advocating for rehabilitation of the bridge, rather than tearing the bridge down and replacing it with an oversized structure. The historic bridge crosses over the exceptional value Tincum Creek, which DRN experts and consultants have determined would be adversely affected by building a new bridge.

In addition the letter states:

“Preserving natural resources and Tincum’s historical features are among the reasons DRN advocates rehabilitating the bridge. “The Delaware Riverkeeper Network and Tincum residents interested in protecting the township’s historic and natural resources have been providing both you and PennDOT with this information over the last four years yet you’ve refused to consider the rehabilitation alternative. Instead you’ve used your position to advocate for unnecessary infrastructure that will lead to more unsafe truck traffic in a rural community which does not have the roads designed to handle it.”

The letter states that DRN has presented PennDOT and Representative Quinn with an alternative rehabilitation plan that was not reviewed in detail. DRN has provided expert reports examining replacement and rehabilitation options, and found that rehabilitation is more cost-effective and showed that the township's largest fire truck would be able to cross the single lane bridge with alterations, addressing assertions that a new bridge is required to accommodate emergency vehicles.

“Representative Quinn has let her community down. She has failed to ensure that PennDOT protects the health and safety of the community by pursuing the rehabilitation option, which will at the same time protect the environmental and historic resources that residents of the town and region have worked so hard to preserve. At a minimum she should be seeking a full Environmental Impact Statement that would ensure the rights and environmental resources of the community are considered before a final option is made. Instead Representative Quinn has supported PennDOT's plan to claim an inappropriate exemption in order to avoid these more detailed reviews clearly required by the federal National Environmental Policy Act,” **said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper and leader of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

“Unfortunately Representative Quinn has not advocated for the needs of the Tincum and Headquarters Road community and has not fully recognized the hardships of having the bridge ignored and then closed. We need our state representative to think about the whole picture -- the importance of the habitability and safety of the community, the tourism that is based on the beauty and historic nature of Tincum (including its bridges), and minimizing the environmental impacts to an Exceptional Value creek and creek crossing that feeds into the Delaware River instead of the convenience to PennDOT,” **Joan Ramage, a Tincum Township resident, said.** “I would like to see Representative Quinn take a leadership role in reining in PennDOT from preventing common sense, reasonable and community minded solutions and guiding them to a fix to this issue that maintains the historic bridge, and gives the community a safe crossing and access to emergency services.”

The text of the letter can be found at: <http://bit.ly/repquinnletter>

The expert reviews and comments DRN refers to in the letter can be found at:
<http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/ongoing-issues/sheepholeheadquarters-road-bridge>

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Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) is a nonprofit membership organization working throughout the four states of the Delaware River Watershed including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and New York. DRN provides effective environmental advocacy, volunteer monitoring programs, stream restoration projects, public education, and legal enforcement of environmental protection laws.