



January 18, 2018

Representative Marguerite Quinn
1032 N. Easton Rd
Doylestown, PA 18902-1055

Dear Rep. Marguerite Quinn,

Headquarters Road Bridge has been closed for nearly 7 years and everyone agrees it needs to be reopened. The simple, obvious solution would be to fix this historic bridge. Although PennDOT has offered a variety of reasons over the years as to why they must instead demolish and replace it, none of their reasons hold up under scrutiny.

If PennDOT had agreed to repair or rehabilitate this bridge in 2010, it would have been back in service five years ago. Instead, they have stuck to an expensive and impractical replacement plan developed decades ago in ignorance of the bridge's historic significance and environmental constraints. This plan offers little or no benefit to anyone while creating such serious inherent problems that it is unlikely to ever get permitted.

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.

The Delaware Riverkeeper Network has let you and PennDOT know from the beginning that PennDOT was on the wrong track, in fact we've gone far beyond simply commenting, we've backed up every comment with reports from professionals and engineers. We've even provided PennDOT (and you) with preliminary engineer design plans for the Rehab Alternative at our own expense - plans which PennDOT has refused even to review in detail. Despite this indefensible resistance to a strong alternative backed by engineering analysis and plans, you have done nothing to urge PennDOT to honestly and earnestly consider the option.

Over the last five years a number of consultants and experts have conducted studies and reports examining the replacement and rehabilitation options:

- According to a 2014 review rehabilitating the current structure would cost approximately \$2.65 million compared to more than \$4.2 million for demolition and replacement. Rehabilitating the bridge would also result in opening the crossing sooner and reduce the impact on the Tinicum Creek, a wild and scenic and exceptional value stream. Several property owners near the bridge have indicated they will challenge PennDOT's eminent domain process in order to acquire easements for replacing the structure resulting in more delays before the crossing is reopened. The rehabilitation option would eliminate these legal hurdles.
- Both you and PennDOT officials continue to claim safety and emergency services require a new two lane bridge but a review of accident reports from Tinicum Township by transportation experts in 2015 show

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only three accidents, unrelated to the size of the bridge, occurred on the bridge over a seven year period. In a discussion with our transportation consultant, township fire officials indicated they had no preference for a one or two lane bridge.

- Over two years ago the Delaware Riverkeeper Network also provided an expert report showing the township's largest fire truck would be able to cross the single lane bridge with alterations in the structure wing walls and a cut back in the embankment on the east side of the bridge, thereby addressing assertions that the town's emergency vehicles needed anything other than a rehabilitated bridge.

Many of PennDOT's projects in Tincum during your tenure in office have been disasters. Nevertheless, just as with the proposed demolition and replacement of the Headquarters Road Bridge, you have consistently defended and championed PennDOT while ignoring the concerns of your constituents in Tincum Township. You would be hard pressed to find anyone in Tincum who approves of the two most recent PennDOT bridge replacements on Headquarters Road, at Cafferty Road and at Tettermer Road. Besides being outsized, unnecessarily destructive and ugly in their historic settings—these new bridges created dangerous speedways at intersections with poor visibility, created turning problems for school buses and fire trucks (which, for example, can no longer make turns onto Tettermer Road in a single move), and increased sediment pollution and erosion in an Exceptional Value stream. These and other deficiencies were obscured or falsified in PennDOT's permit applications, and yet there has been no penalty for either PennDOT or its agents for this gross waste of taxpayer money which you supported.

In reviewing PennDOT's plans for replacing the Headquarters Road Bridge, our consultants and Delaware Riverkeeper Network experts on staff have determined the project will change the flow of Tincum Creek downstream of the bridge site and could result in erosion and other damage.

More than 70 reports, studies and letters regarding the future of the Headquarters Road Bridge can be reviewed on our organization website. <http://www.delawareriverkeeper.org/ongoing-issues/sheepholeheadquarters-road-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.

Throughout this process both you and PennDOT have argued that destruction of the Headquarters Road Bridge and construction of an oversized replacement is the fastest way to a restored crossing and re-opened roadway, and yet we find ourselves once again in a long, unneeded delay in a process that allows the bridge to continue to remain closed and residents to continue to wonder when the state will take restoration of this bridge seriously.

We urge you to change your position and to work proactively towards a solution that best serves all the goals of the community - safety, environmental, and property rights protection. We urge you to take a strong and clear stance urging immediate rehabilitation of the Headquarters Road Bridge so it can be reopened as soon as possible while at the same time protecting the rights and values of our community.

Respectfully requested,



Maya van Rossum
the Delaware Riverkeeper