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August 23, 2005

J. Richard Capka, Acting Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Administrator Capka:

The United States and Canada share a critical border crossing along the Detroit River. Four partners, the Federal Highway Administration, the Michigan Department of Transportation, Transport Canada, and the Ontario Ministry of Transportation are currently involved with the Detroit River International Crossing Project, a project that offers to provide a new crossing linking Southeast Michigan and Ontario, Canada.

To better understand the role of the Federal Highway Administration in this process, please answer the following questions.

1. Who is making the study? What will the study do? How is the study being conducted? What role will the public have in this study?

2. What permits will have to be obtained from the Army Corps of Engineers regarding this study?

3. What has to be done with regard to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)? Is there a timeline for that process? If so please explain in detail? Will the public have an opportunity to be heard?

4. What are the current sites that are being considered for potential crossings? Besides the illustrative alternatives, are there any other sites being considered?

5. Please provide a detailed timeline of all activities that will take place in the decision making process that will result in site selection for a crossing, including who makes what decision at each point in the process.

6. At what points during the process will the public be able to formally participate and make their thoughts known? Since the June 2005 public hearings, will there be other public hearings held? If so, when? What will be the purpose of those hearings?

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7. Is there a final date set for selection of a crossing route? If so, when is that date?

8. Which project partners make what decisions regarding the project? What is the role of the Federal Highway Administration? What is the role of Michigan Department of Transportation? What is the role of Transport Canada? What is the role of the Ontario Ministry of Transportation?

9. How is the federal government working with state and local governments in regard to this project?

Recently, I have heard numerous concerns from my constituents about the effects of a crossing through the Downriver area. Your answers will provide a better understanding of the process for my constituents and the opportunities they will have to be able to share with the project partners their concerns with regard to certain possible locations. It is important that all aspects of the study process are open and transparent, and that the public has every opportunity to be heard every step of the way.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me or Jack Maniko of my staff at (202) 225-4071.

Sincerely,

John D. Dingell
Member of Congress