

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

January 25, 2010

The Honorable Victor Mendez
Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Mendez:

We understand that the Federal Highway Administration and the New York State Department of Transportation are conducting a feasibility study to determine whether to utilize a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) for construction of a new Lake Champlain Bridge between New York and Vermont. Should it be decided to move forward with a PLA, we would strongly encourage the adoption of the New York State prevailing wage for workers on both sides of the lake.

PLAs have been important in securing quality work by skilled building-trade workers on major construction projects nationwide. By addressing key workforce concerns up front, this sort of agreement helps government agencies, building contractors and trade unions anticipate and avoid potential problems, thus ensuring stability, efficiency and productivity for the project. Of equal importance, PLAs also help ensure that skilled workers receive fair and adequate wages.

We appreciate your consideration of this important issue. We look forward to working with you to ensure an expeditious completion of the Lake Champlain Bridge.

Sincerely,


PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator


BERNARD SANDERS
United States Senator


PETER WELCH
United States Representative


CHARLES SCHUMER
United States Senator


KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND
United States Senator


SCOTT MURPHY
United States Representative


WILLIAM OWENS
United States Representative

Cc: Stanley Gee, Acting Commissioner, New York State Department of Transportation
David Dill, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Transportation