

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 11, 2012

John Matheussen
Chief Executive Officer
Delaware River Port Authority
One Port Center
2 Riverside Drive
PO Box 1949
Camden, NJ 08101

Dear Mr. Matheussen:

We write regarding the proposed ADA accessible ramp on the Camden side of the Ben Franklin Bridge that was recently eliminated from the 2012 DRPA capital plan. While we recognize that difficult decisions must be made in the current budgetary climate, we are writing in support of this ramp, which would build on funding invested by the federal government to improve the regional economy.

More than 40 percent of Camden residents do not have access to an automobile, and the Ben Franklin Bridge provides the region's only pedestrian or bike access to the City of Philadelphia. The proposed ramp would replace a steep staircase, ensuring all commuters can travel safely and conveniently across the Delaware River, regardless of ability or mode. This would help take cars off our roads, reduce congestion and pollution and support economic development efforts along the Camden waterfront.

We were proud to help author the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which created the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants. In 2010, \$23 million in TIGER funds were awarded to construct and enhance bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Southern New Jersey and Eastern Pennsylvania. The Ben Franklin Bridge ramp is an important link between the states and its completion will complement this federal investment, continuing to spur job growth and economic development in the region.

We understand that you must make hard choices in finalizing the budget, but we ask for your consideration of the Ben Franklin Bridge ADA ramp. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,


FRANK R. LAUTENBERG
United States Senator


ROBERT MENENDEZ
United States Senator