

Dear Senator Diamond and Representative McClean – I am writing to you today to express my appreciation in your continued work as the chairs of the JSC on Transportation and members of the blue ribbon commission.

I've been following the activities of the blue ribbon commission; I'm not surprised there is a deadlock as this has been a subject that many just want to ignore. I think in the end the solution will have to be a little bit of everything mentioned and just saying NO will no longer work.

Now that construction costs have ballooned, evidenced by the recently reported annual \$232 million shortfall, it is my suggestion that the DOT, and the JSC on Transportation as checks and balances on the DOT, take the drastic move of calling for an immediate stand-down of DOT operations, much like a stand-down in the military, to include the audit and validation all new projects (not existing road and bridge repairs that are long overdue) to verify that said new projects still fit the parameters of cost and benefits today as they did when they were first studied. Projects that are no longer viable, due to increased construction costs, should be immediately culled out of the process. DOT priorities must be reset to focus on the current unmet transportation needs of the state and not new infrastructure.

I would be remiss if I didn't point out my displeasure with the DOT painting such a bleak picture when they have tens of millions set aside (at least \$25 million of required state matching funds for the \$25 million INFRA grant) for the \$79.25 million I-395/Route 9 connector that the City of Brewer and its citizens do not support.

The connector's cost estimate of \$79.25 million is in 2017 dollars. The I-395/Route 9 connector project had a Benefit/Cost ratio of 1.1 in August 2012 – that B/C ratio had magically increased to 1.3 in the October 2017 INFRA Grant application.

There is every reason to believe that the newly experienced rise in construction costs will also affect the cost of the connector in a similar fashion and the connector's B/C ratio is probably already less than 1.0 which would make the project no longer viable. Mathematically, an increase in the cost above \$23.775 million should drop the B/C ratio below the acceptable ratio of 1.0 and if you use the 46% increase that bloated the shortfall – that increase is \$115.705 million or an increase of \$36.455 million which would drastically drop the B/C ratio to 0.89. Will the DOT continue to hang on to a

project that is no longer monetarily viable? And—how would we know? When will the DOT tell us the real cost, in 2019 dollars, of the I-395/Route 9 connector? And if they continue to pursue the connector, how are they going to for pay it?

The connector project is still in the preliminary engineering status, or at least that's all we know since the DOT has not updated their project website since February. The project to replace bridge#1564 (Wilson Street/I-395) in Brewer was one of 11 projects suspended last May for rising construction costs—that bridge replacement is the first phase of the connector project and is only being replaced because of the connector at a time when 14% of our bridges are structurally deficient. We do know that two more homes have been demolished over the past few weeks at the same time that the DOT is arguing they have no money...

I have been very vocal in my non-support since 2012. The 2B-2 alternative selection (the second preferred alternative of the project) IMO was illegitimate from the start as the DOT changed the original purpose and needs of the study at the last moment without going back and taking another look at all the other 79 studied alternatives. There was never a time when we felt the DOT was actually working to select the best solution for our communities and even our PAC members felt early on that the selection was pre-determined and all else was for show. For a history of the last 8 years as seen from a private citizen, please view: <https://i395rt9hardlook.com/>

I get it—they have that \$25 million INFRA grant for the connector, but the required state matching funds and the extra funds to make up the \$14.6 million shortfall in the grant (application was for \$39.625 million) are real monies that could be used for other projects. And, where will the DOT find the extra money for any extra construction costs that may now be applicable to the connector? Giving up the INFRA grant would put an immediate \$25 million or more of our state's money against the shortfall.

It is time to do something drastic; things are not going to get any better, they will just continue to get worse every year and as the Portland Herald just pointed out this morning: the \$150 million Gorham connector, passing the legislature in 2017, could cost 60% more than expected.

Respectfully, Larry Adams | Brewer resident