

10/24/17

David Bernhardt, PE, Commissioner
Maine Department of Transportation
16 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0016

Joel D. Wardwell
PO Box 263
Bucksport, Me. 04416

Re: I-395—Rt. 9 Connector

Dear Commissioner Bernhardt:

I am writing this letter to offer my full support for the extension of I-395 in Brewer/Holden to connect with Rt. 9. I have traveled and worked in this area my whole life. This area, as many areas of Maine, has seen congestion continue to grow. I have lived in Bucksport my entire life and in Dedham, Maine in the summer months. Growing up on the south end of Rt. 46 we have lived with a great deal of truck traffic. The real issue now seems to be a lot of traffic that needs to connect to down east Maine is trapped and mired down in the Rt. 1A traffic. Route 1A is the connection to Rt. 46 which gets this east bound traffic to Rt. 9. Route 1A between Brewer and Ellsworth has a far greater volume of traffic than US Rt. 1---year-round in eastern Maine.

I personally witness this traffic from May to thru Oct. as the summer tourist traffic backs up sometimes nearly a mile on I-395 waiting their turn to get onto 1A heading towards Bar Harbor and points east. Much of this traffic gets to Rt. 46 north and heads to Rt. 9. Accidents on this stretch of 1A our frequent and cause major back-ups of traffic. The intersection of Rt. 46 and 1A and the north end of Rt. 46 are not built for a volume of traffic, especially truck and large RV traffic.

The other alternative is to navigate through Bangor and Brewer to get on your way to Rt. 9 traveling to North Main Street in Brewer. Using Main Street in Brewer with traffic and traffic lights from I-395 to avoid Rt.1A is not a good solution. Neither is coming through Bangor and using either of the other bridge options as these intersections are very busy continually. Neither of these bridge options is good for trucks—tight turns, a bad hill start at State and North Main Streets, and congestion of businesses and turning traffic.

I have worked in the trucking and construction my whole life in this area of Maine. It is time to alleviate this problem and move into the 21st century. The route for the extension has been well thought out with much input, although you cannot make all happy with the route, all agree as to

the need for this highway. This is not just about time saved (it will), alleviating congestion (it will), but above all safety—as I have witnessed the accidents congestion in this area causes.

Thank you for your time, allowing me to share my concerns, and offer my support. If there is anything I can do to help MDOT move this project along please don't hesitate to call me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel D. Wardwell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Joel D. Wardwell

207-852-5602