



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

PORTSMOUTH NAVAL SHIPYARD
PORTSMOUTH, NH 03804-5000

IN REPLY REFER TO:

11220
Ser 2300/030
April 16, 2014

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

Dear Commissioner Bernhardt:

SUBJECT: SARAH MILDRED LONG BRIDGE TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT
GENERATING ECONOMIC RECOVERY DISCRETIONARY GRANT

I am writing to provide you with input on your submittal to the United States Department of Transportation for a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant, for investing in the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge replacement.

As you know, the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge spans the Piscataqua River between Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Kittery, Maine. It currently carries United States Route 1 Bypass on its upper deck and an active railroad line on its lower deck. The rail line is of particular interest to the Navy and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and in our view, is a critical national asset for which a TIGER Grant to help fund its replacement is very appropriate. The Sarah Mildred Long Bridge carries the only rail line spur, a mission essential artery that connects the Shipyard to the national rail system. The Shipyard uses the rail spur in support of our vital military mission which includes the overhaul and repair of the United States Navy nuclear powered submarine fleet. The mission includes reactor plant servicing which involves the shipment of spent naval nuclear fuel to the Naval Reactors Facility at the Idaho National Laboratory in Idaho Falls, Idaho. The shipments are made via rail using robust, specially designed containers that are integral to a rail car. Rail shipments are made approximately once per year and consist of either empty shipping containers being delivered to the Shipyard or shipping containers of spent nuclear fuel off the Shipyard. Shipments are currently scheduled at this rate between now and the year 2029. The Navy has a long history of safely moving nuclear fuel in this manner as discussed in the United States Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program review that is included with this letter.

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The work involved in servicing the Navy's nuclear powered submarine fleet requires an experienced and highly skilled workforce. This workforce itself is a critical national asset. If the rail line was not available for shipping spent nuclear fuel, an alternative that would be evaluated by the Navy would be to move the workload to another nuclear capable shipyard. Doing so would eliminate the capability to perform this complex and important Navy workload at the Shipyard.

The Navy is working as a partner with Maine Department of Transportation to provide work and storage facilities, including approximately five acres of real estate for manufacturing bridge components, in support of the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge replacement project. This partnership will reduce construction costs for the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge replacement, offset added costs to the state for including a train rail on the bridge, and reduce future risk to the Navy of executing its critical mission. The existence of this partnership demonstrates the importance of the success of this project to the Navy and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide you this input and to work with you and your office as we continue to collaborate on the design and functional details of the Sarah Mildred Long Bridge replacement. As always, if we can be of further assistance to you on this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



J. F. ARGUE
Nuclear Engineering and
Planning Manager
By direction of the
Shipyard Commander

Enclosure: 1. The United States Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program