

June 7, 2017

Mr. James Hassinger
Executive Director
Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
Two Chatham Center, Suite 500
112 Washington Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Executive Director Hassinger:

We are writing you and the entire membership of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission regarding the Commission's vote to table the extension of the Mon-Fayette Expressway to Monroeville.

Suffice it to say, we were disappointed by this vote and do not believe that further delaying this project or the reallocation of these funds are the best interest of the region and its citizens. As Senators and Representatives who represent large amounts of the Mon Valley, we felt it important to share our thoughts on this vital project.

While we know that you are intimately familiar with this project, given the commission's recent decision we wanted to stress the negative impact of not completing this project. Currently, the northern terminus of the Mon-Fayette Expressway is Route 51. If you've ever driven on this route, you know that it is hardly a logical dropping-off point for any sort of freight, nor is it an efficient passenger route to Pittsburgh. Completing the next leg of the expressway to Interstate 376, and eventually the airport, would kick start economic development in the Mon Valley in a very aggressive way.

This project, decades in the making, is beginning to show results. In the southern portion of the Mon-Fayette Expressway you find business parks teeming with activity from companies like Chevron, Boeing, and Johnson Mathey, along with several natural gas and other industries providing thousands of jobs in the region. The southern section of the Mon-Fayette's connection to Interstate 68 and the greater Morgantown network has made this site very appealing for businesses. A better connection in the north would provide similar results and strengthen what is already in place for the entire Mon Valley.

Further, we need to modernize the area's highways in order to attract visitors. Modernization and ease of access will help facilitate visitor travel to our historic downtowns to sample our local restaurants and see our local sights. The old, slow routes clogged with traffic and lights are the very routes that travelers work to avoid and that deter a quick afternoon trip to experience somewhere new. It's important to remember that roads travel both ways. This expressway is not only an asset to the Mon Valley; it also would drive people visiting this area and the greater Laurel Highlands into Pittsburgh.

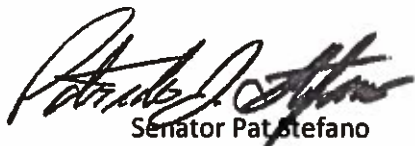
This region in southwestern Pennsylvania is largely underserved in regard to its infrastructure needs. Projects such as the extension of the Mon-Fayette Expressway provide us with a once in a generation opportunity to spur growth and bring economic activity to the area's businesses and population. We also want to bring your attention to the money already spent to bring this project to fruition. We know that the hopes of many municipal officials across the region have been pinned to completion of this project. Many of these municipalities have passed resolutions in support of moving this project forward which are enclosed with this letter.

Finally, we bring your attention to the individuals along the proposed route whose home values have been effected and who have been forced to sell their homes or properties for far less than they deserve because of this project. Abandoning this project now means all of this would be for nothing. We owe our taxpayers and all who have sacrificed and worked so hard for decades on this road far better than that.

As you can see by this letter and the resolutions enclosed, support for this project is both bipartisan and represents communities throughout the Mon Valley. Any attempt to divert these funds legislatively, as has been suggested by some, will be met with stiff resistance in the Senate and state House. We believe this funding is best spent here, in southwestern Pennsylvania particularly to help the Mon Valley. We cannot allow the opposition of some, many of whom did not support Act 89 which provided this funding in the first place, to stop this vital road from being completed.

We'd like to thank you for all of your hard work in advocating for the infrastructure of southwestern Pennsylvania and look forward to continuing to work with you as we move our region forward. We urge the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission to vote to allow the Mon-Fayette extension project to move forward. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns regarding this issue.

Sincerely,



Senator Pat Stefano
32nd District



Senator Jim Brewster
45th District



Senator Jay Costa
43rd District



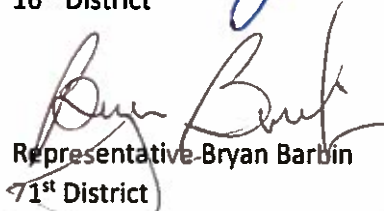
Senator Camera Bartolotta
46th District

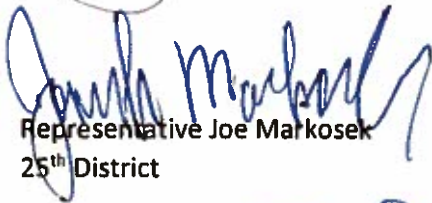


Senator Kim Ward
39th District


Representative Bill Kortz
38th District


Representative Robert Matzie
16th District

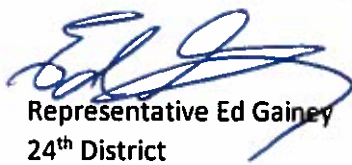

Representative Bryan Barbin
71st District


Representative Joe Markosek
25th District



Representative Harry Readshaw
36th District


Representative Anita Kulik
45th District


Representative Dan Frankel
23rd District

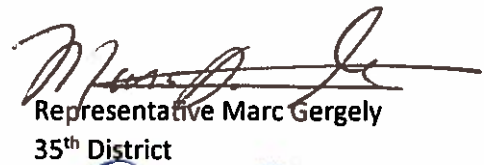

Representative Ed Gainey
24th District


Representative Paul Costa
34th District


Representative Pam Snyder
50th District


Representative Frank Burns
72nd District


Representative Jake Wheatley
19th District


Representative Marc Gergely
35th District


Representative Daniel Deasy
27th District


Representative Adam Ravenstahl
20th District


Representative Frank Dermody
33rd District


Representative Dom Costa
21st District


Representative Anthony DeLuca
32nd District

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph Petrarca".

**Representative Joseph Petrarca
55th District**

cc:

Membership of Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

Senator John Rafferty, Chairman Senate Transportation Committee

Senator John Sabatina, Democratic Chairman Senate Transportation Committee

Ms. Leslie Richards, Pennsylvania Secretary of Transportation

Commissioner Bill Lieberman, Chairman Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission