

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 21, 2011

Administrator Peter H. Appel
Research and Innovative Technology Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Appel:

We write to express our strong support for the Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation (CAIT) at Rutgers University to continue as a University Transportation Center.

Since its inception in 1998, CAIT has provided practical and replicable solutions to our region's complex transportation challenges. The Center focuses its research on the areas of state of good repair, safety, and economic competitiveness—critical issues for our region. Rutgers is the only university in the country that can claim two of the largest ongoing federal infrastructure research projects: the \$25.5 million FHWA Long-Term Bridge Performance program and the \$17.9 million Automated Nondestructive Evaluation and Rehabilitation Systems project funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Under this new proposal, CAIT would build a consortium with other universities to increase its geographic reach and deepen its research capabilities. Joining with transportation researchers at Columbia University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, Princeton University, University of Delaware, University of Texas at El Paso, Utah State University, University of Virginia, and Virginia Tech, the consortium led by CAIT will be regionally, demographically, and academically diverse.

We are encouraged by the work CAIT has done to apply its research to solve real-world problems. Together with government, industry, and academic partners, CAIT has worked to make the country's infrastructure safer, more durable, and more efficient. This new consortium will allow them to further this work, and we support the University Transportation Center proposal submitted by Rutgers and its consortium partners. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Frank R. Lautenberg


Robert Menendez