

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

November 22, 2022

Acting Administrator Stephanie Pollack
Federal Highway Administration
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Acting Administrator Pollack:

We write today to express concerns over the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) recent decision to block the New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) roadway safety messages.

As you know, there is an urgent need to improve safety on our roadways. Accordingly, NJDOT is working diligently to raise awareness of the need for motorists to adhere to move over laws, speed limits, and other safety warnings that can save lives.

Last month, NJDOT began a campaign utilizing humor and Garden State culture to raise awareness around safety. These quintessential New Jersey messages have had a significant, positive reception around the state, and have helped to alert in-state and out-of-state motorists to take reasonable precautions.

Given the positive reception around these recent safety efforts in New Jersey, we are very concerned to have learned of FHWA's decision to block the use of these signs earlier this week without providing NJDOT with a comprehensive, data-driven justification for the decision. We understand that FHWA requires roadway signs to command the attention of the motorist and convey a simple clear meaning. The recent campaign in New Jersey to deliver creative, short, humorous, and attention-grabbing messages seems to be an absolutely ideal way to raise awareness around safety and potentially save lives.

While we truly appreciate the expertise and oversight of FHWA in helping keep our highways safe, we think it is important to keep in mind that New Jersey-specific approaches to communicating to drivers in our state can be the best way to make a positive impact. As such, and as we approach the extremely busy holiday traffic season, we respectfully request responses to the following regarding this decision in the coming days:

1. Please explain the analysis that went into FHWA's decision to block NJDOT's safety campaign.
2. Please provide any data or evidence collected over the last several weeks that informed FHWA's decision.

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3. There may be steps that Congress needs to take to facilitate the modernization of roadway safety communication, and if so, please provide my team and me with details of how our office can support FHWA's work in this area.
4. It is our understanding that other states have also utilized comparable safety campaigns. Please provide any insight into why FHWA has chosen to block New Jersey's specific approach to alerting motorists.

Unconventional and creative methods for solving our common problems is a core part of what makes New Jersey an exceptional place to call home. We appreciate any information you can provide over the coming days and hope you will work with NJDOT to ensure that the most effective approaches to promoting safety in New Jersey are promptly implemented.

Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Donald Norcross
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



Jefferson Van Drew
Member of Congress

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Andy Kim
Member of Congress



Tom Malinowski
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress