

The Senate of West Virginia
Charleston



RYAN W. WELD
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Mr. Jimmy Wriston, P.E.
Commissioner of Highways
West Virginia Department of Transportation
Building 5
1900 Kanawha Blvd E
Charleston, WV 25305

Commissioner Wriston,

I am writing to you today on behalf of myself, Senator Laura Wakim Chapman, and Delegate Jimmy Willis. As you are aware, earlier this morning the Market Street Bridge (the "Bridge") connecting Brooke County to Steubenville, Ohio, was closed indefinitely by the West Virginia Department of Transportation. This closure came with absolutely no warning to either the members of the public who utilize this bridge each day or to the elected officials who represent this area. The handling of this issue by the state agency you are responsible for managing is completely unacceptable and has made the lack of leadership within the DOT even clearer.

While we are certain that further questions will arise in the future, there are several questions that we are currently seeking answers to from the DOT in relation the Bridge and the circumstances surrounding its closure:

- On December 20, an inspection was carried out on the Bridge as a part of the three-month inspection cycle that monitors its cable anchorage system. What issues were discovered during that inspection that led to its closure?
- Following that inspection, when was the decision made to close the Bridge?
- Why was vehicular traffic allowed to continue in the time between the inspection's completion and the Bridge's closure the following morning?
- Why was there no effort made by the DOT to notify either the public or state and local officials who represent this area?

- What is the short-term plan for the Bridge in terms of resolving the issues that were discovered during the inspection? Will there be another inspection performed and what is the plan to make the necessary repairs? What is the timeline?
- Is the goal of the DOT to repair the Bridge so that it may be reopened to vehicular traffic?

The roads and bridges that our constituents drive on are perhaps the most visible symbol of our state government – and when decisions that greatly affect them such as this occur, they deserve full transparency. Please provide your response to these questions no later than the close of business on Friday, Dec. 29. We look forward to receiving your responses.

Very Respectfully,



Ryan W. Weld
Majority Whip

CC: Brian Abraham