

## Draft T&I Member Day Remarks

It's as if President Biden and Transportation Secretary Buttigieg had the Hartford region and the I-84/91 Interchange in mind when they laid out their bold plan for infrastructure, the American Jobs Act. In Connecticut, we're have a proposal that incorporates so many of their priorities including:

- Projects of National and Regional Significance
- Redressing Historic Inequities
- Modernizing Public Transportation
- Infrastructure Resilience
- Multimodal Connections to Airports
- Intercity Rail
- Brownfield and Superfund Remediation
- Housing
- Physical, Social, and Civic Infrastructure

The I-84/91 infrastructure was created during the Eisenhower administration when Interstates 84 and 91 were installed, bisecting the City of Hartford, isolating or eliminating thriving neighborhoods and cutting off access to the Connecticut River. Now, those highways make up the number one chokehold in Connecticut, the number two in New England, and depending on who you talk to between number 11 and number 30 in the Nation. Throw in a levee system that is in need of repair due to sandpiping, and the current situation rises to the height of urgency. An investment to fix these problems incorporates all the various elements of the Biden infrastructure proposal. That's why we're so bullish about this.

Chairman DeFazio has been to the district no less than half a dozen times, and predecessor, Chairman Shuster has been many times as well. Both have recognized the importance and significance of this, and that is

why we are before the committee to ask for this important infrastructure funding.

Both the City of Hartford and East Hartford have been blocked from the Connecticut River by virtue of being bisected by I-84 & I-91 and the mixmaster, a massive interchange that contains the equivalent of all the concrete used in downtown Hartford, and takes up the land equivalent of that downtown. This design has created racial isolation in the city. The North End of Hartford, which was once a thriving community, has been cut off from the city and cut off from their waterfront. As a result, the 06120 is now Connecticut's poorest zip code.

This has long been a posterchild for bad planning for the region and now is the historic opportunity to correct that. Now, this project will be the model and prototype of the American Jobs Plan.

We can end this racial isolation, fulfil a fifty-year goal of recapturing the only National Blueway-designated river, and fix a traffic chokehold which is currently a tri-state concern.

Connecticut DOT Commissioner Joseph Giulietti and Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont have embarked on a design build study to do just this, by realigning I-84 and 91, and eliminating the mixmaster and Atena viaduct. I want to thank the committee for its time, and look forward to pressing this issue. I'm glad to be working hand and glove with Governor Lamont and Commissioner Giulietti on this because of its vital importance to the State of Connecticut.