

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 9, 2006

The Honorable Maria Cino
Acting Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 7th Street, S.W.
Washington D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Cino:

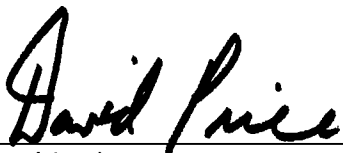
We are writing to express our strong support for the application of North Carolina State University's Center for Transportation and the Environment (CTE) to become a Tier I university transportation center.

Since its establishment in 1992, CTE has helped to advance the transportation and environmental objectives of the state of North Carolina and the nation by cultivating solid inter-agency and stakeholder partnerships within the transportation industry. CTE's track record of encouraging creative collaborations, both within and beyond governmental boundaries, has led to numerous research and education initiatives that have helped North Carolina and other states achieve environmental excellence in transportation. Attached, for your information, are a number of examples of CTE successes.

As a Tier I center, CTE will pursue additional advanced research and education initiatives that support the nation's research/technology agenda. These include plans already underway by the Center to (1) establish a high performance computer modeling laboratory that will develop and enhance environmental data-driven analytical tools for transportation planning and decision making; (2) develop on-demand Web-based training and other distance education tools to strengthen the knowledge and skill base of a diverse and changing transportation and environmental workforce; (3) migrate existing CTE-developed training in context sensitive solutions (CSS) and community impact assessment (CIA) to national courses; and (4) pursue additional national research on the environmental implications of freight transportation, including the identification of technology innovations and best practices that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We believe that CTE is precisely the kind of federal-state-university partnership that Congress intended for the UTC program. We urge you to give all due consideration to its applications to become a Tier I UTC.

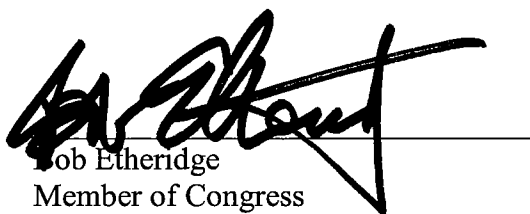
Sincerely,



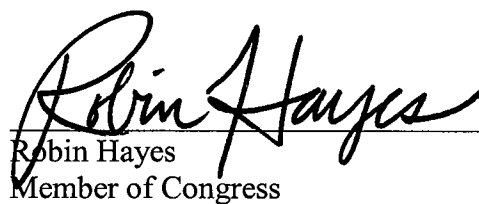
David Price
Member of Congress



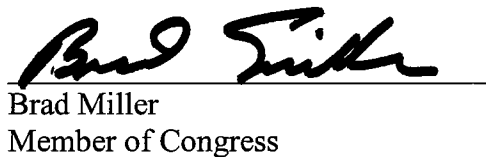
Howard Coble
Member of Congress



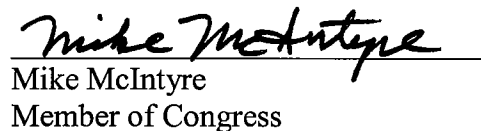
Rob Etheridge
Member of Congress



Robin Hayes
Member of Congress



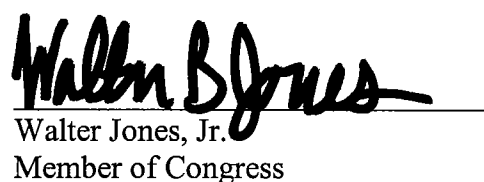
Brad Miller
Member of Congress



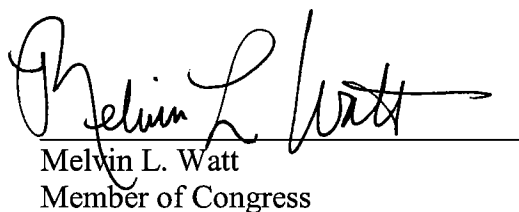
Mike McIntyre
Member of Congress



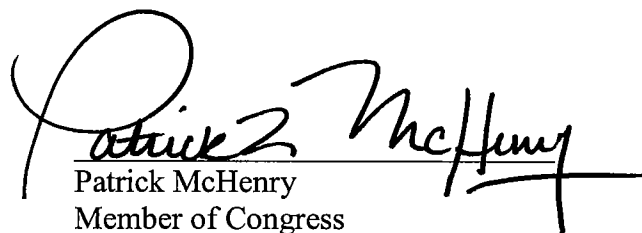
Sue Myrick
Member of Congress



Walter Jones, Jr.
Member of Congress



Melvin L. Watt
Member of Congress



Patrick McHenry
Member of Congress

cc: Dr. Ashok Kaveeshwar, Administrator, USDOT-RITA
Dr. James L. Oblinger, Chancellor, NC State University
Dr. Downey Brill, Director, CTE

Center for Transportation and the Environment Success Stories

- CTE is under contract with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to train more than 1,200 of the department's professional staff in the principles and applications of **Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)**, a strategic decision-making tool that transportation planners and design engineers can use to consider how transportation projects may serve not only mobility and safety needs, but also the natural resource, cultural, and socio-economic interests of communities. CTE has trained more than 1,200 professionals to date. The Center also partners with NCDOT on a unique CSS Summer Academy/Internship Program for undergraduate students. This experiential program educates students on the broad range of environmental concerns related to transportation, including in-depth instruction on CSS principles and applications. Many of these students have been hired by NCDOT and are coming into their jobs with an awareness of environmental issues that far surpasses that of their peers. The CTE/NCDOT educational partnership has helped NCDOT to develop a knowledgeable workforce prepared to address some of the most complex planning and environmental issues in the transportation field.
- CTE serves as the lead organizer and an official sponsor of the **International Conference on Ecology and Transportation**. Drawing the participation of more than 15 countries and nearly 400 transportation and environmental professionals, this biennial inter-agency event showcases the best research applications and standards of practice that enhance the safety and ecological sustainability of surface transportation systems. The next ICOET, to be conducted in Little Rock, AR, in May 2007, will also become the venue for the Federal Highway Administration Environmental Excellence Awards Program, which recognizes the exceptional projects and people that protect and enhance the environment while providing essential infrastructure for our transportation needs.
- CTE partners with the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to produce the **CTE National Broadcast Series**. Using the television studios at NC State University and at the NC Agency for Public Telecommunications, CTE invites research and policy experts from throughout the country to participate in live panel discussions and audience Q&As on emerging issues of national concern to transportation and environmental professionals. The satellite and Web broadcasts have been utilized to introduce the provisions, rulemaking, and guidance associated with new Federal transportation and environmental legislation. They have promoted promising new research innovations, and have featured best management practices that enhance the efficiency and environmental integrity of state transportation programs. Most importantly, they have given thousands of decision makers and practitioners access to important information affecting the sustainability of their transportation programs and projects.
- CTE forged a partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation Center for Climate Change and Environmental Forecasting (CCC) and several stakeholder organizations to host a series of workshops to formulate critical research needs on the **Impacts of Global Climate Change on Hydraulics, Hydrology and Transportation**. The purpose of this initiative is to provide planning and engineering professionals with the information they need to make informed decisions on how to respond to possible changes in transportation infrastructure design as a result of climate change and major storm events. The final results of the research forums will be presented at a nationally televised CTE broadcast as well as submitted for publication.