

The Honorable Tom Carper  
Chairman  
Environment and Public Works Committee  
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Carper:

We are writing to you as elected officials in Delaware to urge you to create a dedicated source of program funding in the next surface transportation bill to develop infrastructure--such as bridges, tunnels, culverts, and channeling fencing--that will help prevent wildlife-vehicle collisions within the state and across the country.

Wildlife crossings can prevent habitat fragmentation by allowing connections between parcels of land that are bisected by roads, railways, electric powerlines, canals, and pipelines. It is estimated that more than twenty percent of the contiguous United States is ecologically modified by the nation's road network. This alteration affects both wildlife that cross these roads and humans who drive on them.

Nationwide, wildlife-vehicle collisions pose an increasingly serious threat to migratory big-game species, as well as reptiles, mammals, and amphibians. The Federal Highway Administration has estimated that the total cost of wildlife-vehicle collisions is more than \$8 billion annually.

In Delaware, insurance giant State Farm looked at data between July 1, 2019 and June 20, 2020 and estimated that the state ranked 27 in animal-automobile collisions. That means that annually residents have a 1 in 109 chance of hitting an animal with their cars.

We commend you for your leadership in the previous Congress for co-authoring a surface transportation bill that included funding for wildlife crossings and request that the upcoming reauthorization bill provides a similar and ideally expanded wildlife crossing program.

Sincerely,