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CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2215

August 23, 2005

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Steven E. Chester, Director
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
525 West Allegan Street
P.O. Box 30473
Lansing, MI 48909-7973

Dear Director Chester:

The United States and Canada share a critical border crossing along the Detroit River. Four partners, the Federal Highway Administration, the Michigan Department of Transportation, Transport Canada, and the Ontario Ministry of Transportation are currently involved with the Detroit River International Crossing Project, a project that offers to provide a new crossing linking Southeast Michigan and Ontario, Canada.

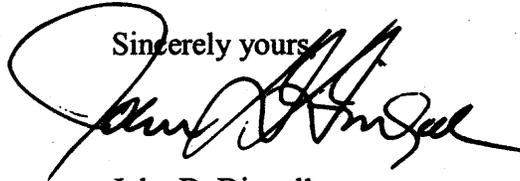
Given the Department of Environmental Quality's role in the process of permitting activity conducted along Michigan's waterways, it is likely the DEQ will be involved with this project. In conversations with my constituents, some have expressed their concern in the permitting process. To help clarify their confusion, please answer the following questions.

1. Please provide the process for permitting on a large project such as the one above. What would the timeline be for permitting such a project?
2. What type of permits will be required for this project?
3. When and where will the public be allowed to participate with regard to the permitting process?
4. What will the DEQ role be with regard to the other project partners?
5. What has to be done with regard to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)? Is there a timeline for that process? If so please explain in detail?

Recently, I have heard numerous concerns from my constituents about the effects of a crossing through the Downriver area. Your answers will provide a better understanding of the process for my constituents and the opportunities they will have to be able to share with the project partners their concerns with regard to certain possible locations. It is important that all aspects of the study process are open and transparent, and that the public has every opportunity to be heard every step of the way.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me or Jack Maniko of my staff at (202) 225-4071.

Sincerely yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John D. Dingell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "D".

John D. Dingell
Member of Congress