



Cape Cod Bridges Replacement: An Urgent Need



Prepared by Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey and Rep. Bill Keating
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Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Introduction	4
Findings	6
Conclusion	19
Endnotes	20

Executive Summary

The Bourne and Sagamore bridges are vital assets for the Cape Cod economy and surrounding communities, and also serve as essential routes for general transportation, tourism, and evacuations in case of an emergency. However, the bridges' structural deficiencies present an ongoing risk to the accessibility and economic stability of the Cape Cod region.

The Cape Cod Bridges replacement is key to modernizing Massachusetts' physical infrastructure to meet the economic, social, and environmental challenges of the 21st century, and Senators Warren and Markey and Rep. Keating are working closely with state and federal actors to secure the funding needed for the replacement.

To underscore the importance of the Cape Cod Bridges replacement project, letters were sent to 36 Cape Cod community stakeholders, including state elected officials, local elected officials, Tribal leaders, and community organizations, seeking their input on how the aging Bourne and Sagamore Bridges are impacting communities, businesses, and residents on and around Cape Cod. The letters asked the stakeholders a series of questions about how the current state of the bridges has impacted their community members and businesses, what replacing the bridges could mean for those everyday people, and the consequences of failing to act. This report contains the results of this inquiry. It finds that:

1. The Cape Cod Bridges are of significant importance to businesses and communities.

The Cape Cod bridges are vital to the businesses on and around the Cape and Islands. State Senator Moran explained that "The bridges are vital for the region's economy and serve as essential routes for general transportation and tourism, upon which the region economy and communities rely heavily," and the Barnstable County Commissioners noted that "The bridges are essential for the delivery of food and supplies to the residents and visitors of the

"The importance of the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges to the region cannot be overstated – the long-term viability of Cape Cod is inextricably linked to the health and fate of both bridges."

The Cape Cod Commission

Cape and Islands, and are vital infrastructure assets sustaining the overall economic health of our region." Every stakeholder that responded to the inquiry affirmed the vital nature of the Bridges to their communities. As noted by the Cape Cod Commission, "The importance of the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges to the region cannot be overstated – the long-term viability of Cape Cod is inextricably linked to the health and fate of both bridges."

2. **The current state of the bridges is hurting Cape Cod businesses.** The Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce explained that "for Cape Cod's business community, the bridges have a tangible impact on the timeliness of product shipments, staff commutes to and from work, and customer access to their business" and that the state of the bridges make it more difficult to recruit and retain workers and to attract new customers. The Chamber noted that "Businesses recognize that, for the millions of visitors who travel to Cape Cod during the region's popular summer tourist season, the bridges are their first and last impression of our community – and this impression is often a poor one," and other stakeholders echoed the concerns about the impact of the bridges on the tourism industry.
3. **The current state of the bridges is negatively impacting residents.** In tandem with the economic impacts of the bridges on local businesses and their employees, residents on the Cape and Islands generally are impacted by the current state of the bridges in their daily

lives, with implications for their access to food, goods, and essential services. The bridges today are “functionally obsolete and dangerous” and are unable to “inclusively support the region and way of life in the 21st century.” Without modern safety features, driving as well as pedestrian and bike access are unsafe and cause “genuine fear...for personal safety, accidents, and regular delays.” These impacts serve as “daily stressors” for Cape Cod communities. The cost of groceries, supplies, and other commodities are already more expensive on the Cape, and supply chain disruptions due to the bridges can exacerbate this issue and affect availability of necessities. The bridges also impact education, with children spending far too long on buses and missing out on educational time due to delays and school closures caused by the bridges. As noted by the Town of Bourne: “After multiple years of isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are still not able to come together as a community and participate fully in social and civic life because of the burden of bridge congestion.”

- 4. The current state of the bridges impacts emergency services and is a public safety risk.** Because the bridges serve as the lifeline connecting the rest of Massachusetts to Cape Cod and are “the only emergency route off of Cape Cod,” the “gridlock caused by bridge congestion adds a dangerous amount of time to the...ability to respond to emergencies.” In cases where ambulances are dispatched over the bridges, congestion can add up to 15 minutes to the average response time. Therefore the “livelihood of residents and visitors could be jeopardized if easy, safe, and quick access to and over the bridges is compromised.”

In addition to emergency medical situations, even access to longer-term health care is negatively impacted by the state of the bridges, given the “lack of resources in healthcare, home care, and behavioral health services, and a serious shortage of

“for Cape Cod’s business community, the bridges have a tangible impact on the timeliness of product shipments, staff commutes to and from work, and customer access to their business”

The Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce

primary care physicians and mental health professionals” and the need to travel off-Cape for regular doctor’s appointments and many types of specialized medical treatment.

And, the vulnerabilities of the bridge will only be exacerbated in the future due to “the growing impacts of climate change and increased storm intensity.” Due to these increasing climate impacts, “a delay in upgrading the bridges leaves Cape Cod residents doubly vulnerable to catastrophe, especially if a major hurricane requiring evacuation coincides with a period of bridge closure associated with a major rehabilitation.” And, “Coupled with the impact of climate change, concerns regarding evacuation and other emergency planning are exacerbated.”

- 5. Failure to replace the bridges would be catastrophic.** The current condition of the bridges is untenable, and without replacements, problems will only grow. State Senator Cyr noted that under the current maintenance approach of “fix-it-as-it fails,” the bridges “will ... continue to decay and “require both bridges to be repaired constantly,” and eventually, “the permanent reduction to single-lane traffic on the bridges in the 2030s.” This will create “unfathomable congestion...impacting the regional economy of Cape Cod as well as the public safety of its residents.” The Town of Oak Bluffs noted that “The failure to replace the Cape Cod bridges would put our very survival at risk, and that “Should the bridges not be replaced in the immediate future, Cape

Cod's business community anticipates that the impacts would be, 'simply put – disastrous.' As summarized by the Barnstable County Regional Board of Commissioners, "If the bridges continue to deteriorate and are not replaced, the region will experience devastating economic impacts due to more frequent closures for repairs, disruption of commuter and tourism travel, increased costs for transportation of goods, and lack of critical access to medical and emergency services."

6. Replacing the bridges would have significant benefits for residents and the economy. The replacement of the bridges will greatly benefit those same communities that are currently suffering. According to the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, "Replacing the 88-year-old, functionally obsolete Bourne and Sagamore Bridges will provide a sense of certainty for Cape Cod's regional economy, which supports nearly 10,000 businesses, a labor force of 117,797, and a \$1.5 billion tourism industry that, in 2022, generated \$181 million in state and local tax revenue - second in the state only to Greater Boston." The Sandwich Select Board noted: "Our business community expects more price stability for goods and services, carbon emissions will be reduced by less idling time on the bridges and road network. In addition to public safety, our labor market will expand with an efficient route to the mainland...A

"If the bridges continue to deteriorate and are not replaced, the region will experience devastating economic impacts due to more frequent closures for repairs, disruption of commuter and tourism travel, increased costs for transportation of goods, and lack of critical access to medical and emergency services."

*The Barnstable County Regional
Board of Commissioner*

reliable transportation system will reconnect the labor market with Cape employers and increase our ability to recruit and retain qualified employees. And according to State Senator Moran, "The Cape Cod Bridges Replacement project will build new bridges that vastly improve travel conditions, meet modern safety standards for vehicle and pedestrian traffic, and provide significantly improved multimodal travel capabilities... replacing these bridges is essential to modernizing the Commonwealth's infrastructure to meet the economic, social, and environmental needs of today.

State and federal officials cannot allow for further delay in moving forward with this vital project.



Introduction

The Bourne and Sagamore Bridges, built in 1933 and now 88 years old, were designed for a useful life of just 50 years. - Town of Oak Bluffs

The Bourne and the Sagamore Bridges, which are owned by the federal government, were built in 1933, and fundamentally “changed the relationship between the Cape and the rest of Massachusetts.”¹ The bridges are the sole access point for the more than 35 million vehicles that cross the canal each year, and serve as the main gateway to Cape Cod for more than 260,000 Cape and Islands residents and over 5 million visitors annually.² They are vital assets for the Cape Cod economy and surrounding communities, and also serve as essential routes for general transportation, tourism, and evacuations in case of an emergency.³ However, the current bridges are nearly 90 years old, functionally obsolete, and require increasingly costly and disruptive maintenance.⁴ The Sagamore and Bourne Bridges both “have limited access points and are structurally deteriorating,” with the Bourne classified as “structurally deficient,” and the Sagamore as “fair.”⁵ The bridges’ structural deficiencies present an ongoing risk to the accessibility and economic stability of the Cape Cod region.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), and other stakeholders are working to replace both the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges and the highway approaches to the bridges.⁶ The project will ultimately result in “new bridges that vastly improve travel conditions, meet modern safety standards for vehicle and pedestrian traffic, and provide significantly improved multimodal travel.”⁷

Senators Warren and Markey and Rep. Keating have been advocating for federal funding for this project since taking office, and have worked to push federal agencies to the table to ensure collaboration. The urgency of replacing the Cape Cod bridges was one of the reasons they supported the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law). This legislation provided USACE with over \$17 billion in new funding – including \$11.6 billion for new construction – and more than \$9 billion in formula funds for Massachusetts.⁸ In the 14 months since it was signed into law by President Biden, Senators Warren and Markey and Rep. Keating have advocated with the White House, the federal Department of Transportation (USDOT), and other federal agencies to ensure this project is a priority.

Largely due to efforts by Massachusetts members of Congress, in December 2022 the Biden Administration awarded Massachusetts a \$1.6 million planning grant for the bridges project, signaling the administration's strong commitment to this critical infrastructure need.⁹ The Biden Administration also included a \$350 million down payment toward a \$600 million allocation in the President's fiscal year 2024 budget for the Army Corps of Engineer, a critical step forward in demonstrating the Administration's commitment to the project.¹⁰ Senators Warren and Markey and Rep. Keating are working hard to ensure that the state obtains the rest of the funding necessary to replace these bridges.

Given the bridges' vital positions as "passageways to the rest of the world, and an integral part of the economy,"¹¹ full funding to replace them is essential. The "economic vitality of Cape Cod and the quality of life for people who live, work, and visit these communities is dependent on these bridges."¹² Local leaders have continually highlighted the impact of current bridge repair closures, and future impacts if the bridges are not replaced. Deputy Director of the Cape Cod Commission Steven Tupper warned that "residents, visitors and local officials can count on more intensive traffic impacts if the replacement project doesn't come to pass...[and that] continued maintenance of the existing bridges would lead to intense cycles of ongoing repair work, some on the order of three to five years in length."¹³ Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce CEO Paul Niedzwiecki said that the bridges "affect every single part of the Cape's economy,"¹⁴ and that "the Bourne and Sagamore bridges provide the economic link between Cape Cod and [the] rest of the Commonwealth...the reliability of the bridges directly impacts the long-term viability of [the] region's economy and the ability of local businesses to survive and thrive."¹⁵ He has also noted that

"our economic livelihood is sort of connected to those two automotive bridges."¹⁶

The Cape Cod Bridges replacement is key to modernizing Massachusetts' physical infrastructure to meet the economic, social, and environmental challenges of the 21st century. To better understand the stakes of the Cape Cod Bridges replacement project, an inquiry was sent on July 21, 2023 to Cape Cod community stakeholders, including state elected officials, local elected officials, Tribal leaders, and community organizations, seeking their input on how the aging Bourne and Sagamore Bridges are impacting communities, businesses, and residents on and around Cape Cod.¹⁷ The inquiry asked the stakeholders about the impact on communities of the state of disrepair of the bridges to date – including the economic impacts to tourism, local workers, businesses, families, and community members, and the impacts to supply chains and the availability and accessibility of goods – the potential future impacts if the bridges continue to deteriorate, and the benefits of replacing the bridges, including the job creation and economic benefits of the bridges replacement project. Twelve responses were received from these groups: respondents include the Cape Cod Canal Region Chamber of Commerce, the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, the Town of Bourne, the Town of Oak Bluffs, the Town of Provincetown, the Town of Sandwich, the Association to Preserve Cape Cod, the Cape Cod Commission, State Senator Julian Cyr, State Senator Susan L. Moran, and the Barnstable County Board of Regional Commissioners. These respondents represent a broad set of communities and stakeholders that stand to benefit from the bridges being replaced. Their responses were compiled in this report, which highlights the importance of the Cape Cod bridges and tells the stories of those most impacted by their current state of disrepair.

Findings

1. The Cape Cod Bridges are of significant importance to businesses and communities.

The Cape Cod bridges are vital to the businesses on and around the Cape and Islands. State Senator Moran explained that “The bridges are vital for the region’s economy and serve as essential routes for general transportation and tourism, upon which the region economy and communities rely heavily,” and that they are “are essentially the sole access points for the more than 35 million vehicles that cross the Cape Cod Canal each year and for the 260,000 residents of Cape Cod, Martha’s Vineyard, and Nantucket.”¹⁸ The Barnstable County Board of Regional Commissioners noted “The importance of the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges to the region cannot be overstated – the long-term viability of Cape Cod is inextricably linked to the health and fate of both bridges” and that “The bridges are essential for the delivery of food and supplies to the residents and visitors of the Cape and Islands, and are vital infrastructure assets sustaining the overall economic health of our region.”¹⁹

The Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, Inc., a “non-profit, membership organization that advocates on behalf of businesses to strengthen and promote regional economic vitality while addressing related cultural, environmental and community concerns,”²⁰ explained in its response to Senator Warren the significance of the bridges to their member companies and the necessity of the bridges to the economic vitality of the region:

The Bourne and Sagamore Bridges are an integral part of doing business on Cape Cod. Businesses on the Cape rely heavily on these two bridges for the shipment of goods and supplies, for staff commutes to and from work, for access to their clients and customer base, and much more. Cape Cod Chamber business members report that revenue, productivity, and the overall success of their

businesses are directly tied to the state of the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges.²¹

The bridges “play a key role in the economic stability of the surrounding south coast region and beyond, as many employees commute daily across both bridges.”²² The Cape Cod Commission described that according to the 2020 Census Bureau, about 31,000 jobs off the Cape were filled by workers living on the Cape, and 21,500 jobs on the Cape – at least 50% of the workforce that serves Cape Cod – is filled by people living off-Cape who must commute over the bridges on a daily basis.²³ In total, over 50,000 workers whose daily commutes rely on the bridges.²⁴ According to the Commission, in 2021, “the earnings of those in-county workers with out-of-county jobs reached \$2.9 billion, and those of out-of-county workers with employment in Barnstable County represented \$814 million.”²⁵ The Commission also described how “Nearly all industries rely in one way or another on timely and successful crossing for employees, goods, and visitors.”²⁶

Individual communities explained the vital nature of the bridges to their communities and economies, including the Town of Bourne which is bisected by the Cape Cod Canal. In a letter signed by Mary Jane Mastrangelo, Chair of the Bourne Select Board, town officials described the role of the bridges in their community:

It is critical to understand that the Town of Bourne is divided by a canal that can only be crossed by these two bridges. All vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic that goes to Cape Cod goes through the Town of Bourne. These same two bridges knit the community together and are traversed multiple times a day by our citizens, employees, school busses, fire engines, and public works trucks. We are completely dependent on the bridges to provide basic municipal services to our people.²⁷

The members of the Select Board of the Town of Provincetown, the furthest community on the Cape, shared their perspective:

[T]he Bourne and Sagamore bridges hold immense significance for Cape Cod, acting as vital lifelines that connect the region to the mainland. However, as the most isolated and furthest community on Cape Cod, they bear even greater importance for the Town of Provincetown. These bridges serve as the primary access points for commerce and infrastructure supporting community members along with the hundreds of thousands of visitors to our town each year, boosting our local economy and contributing significantly to our community's vibrancy.²⁸

Communities on the Islands concurred with the importance of the Bridges. The Town of Oak Bluffs on Martha's Vineyard, in a letter signed by Town Administrator Deborah Potter, described how the island "heavily relies on [the bridges] for our accessibility, stability, and ultimately, our survival" and wrote:

As an island community, our needs are unique and often divergent from those of our neighboring Cape Cod communities. However, our dependency on the Cape Cod Bridges for the movement of people, goods, services, and supplies cannot be overstated. These two access points are the lifeline of our town, connecting us to the essential resources and opportunities we require for sustenance and prosperity.²⁹

Communities on Cape Cod also described the importance of the Bridges to tourism and other industries. Mark R. Forest, Chair of the Barnstable County Board of Regional Commissioners, wrote that "tourism is the main driver of the Cape's economy, and in fact, the economy of the Commonwealth. According to a recently released report from the National Parks Service, the National Seashore brought in an estimated 4 million visitors to Cape Cod. The

economic impact of these visitors, the majority of whom travel across one of the bridges, is valued at over \$750 million dollars."³⁰

The Town of Oak Bluffs wrote:

Tourism remains a vital pillar of our financial resources, and the bridges play a pivotal role in facilitating the supply chain access necessary for our survival. Equally important, they provide crucial transportation links that connect us with the rest of the world.³¹

Provincetown officials wrote:

While Provincetown is also accessible by ferry from Boston, service is unavailable for nearly half the year...the vast majority of Provincetown's economy is critically dependent on vehicular traffic transiting over the Cape Cod Canal...Provincetown's tourism industry exceeds \$250 million annually and is the cornerstone of Provincetown's economy, and the Bourne and Sagamore bridges play a pivotal role in getting people to and from Provincetown as a heavily sought after destination each summer.³²

The Cape Cod Commission wrote:

Tourism is a critical component of the Cape Cod economy and the vast majority of visitors to Cape Cod utilize the bridges to come to the region. For many residents, their annual income heavily or solely depends on a 'good summer season' but not only does tourism directly provide jobs and incomes for many in the region, it also brings in significant tax revenues to the Commonwealth and to support necessary services and infrastructure in the region. For example, the Cape Cod & Islands Water Protection Fund (CCIWPF), a dedicated fund to help Cape Cod and Islands towns pay for necessary wastewater infrastructure and water quality remediation projects is funded from a 2.75% excise tax on traditional lodging and short-term rental. Since...July 2019...This source of revenue

has allowed the CCIWPF Management Board to award approximately \$140 million in subsidies to Cape Cod towns for necessary infrastructure investments.³³

Every stakeholder that responded affirmed the vital nature of the Bridges to their communities. As noted by the Cape Cod Commission, “The importance of the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges to the region cannot be overstated – the long-term viability of Cape Cod is inextricably linked to the health and fate of both bridges.”³⁴

2. The current state of the bridges is hurting Cape Cod businesses and communities.

In addition to describing the importance of the Bridges to their local economies, the stakeholders explained how the current state of disrepair of the bridges, and the frequent need for maintenance work, impacts businesses and communities on and around the Cape. State Senator Moran noted that the bridges “constantly require costly and disruptive maintenance, which hurts the regional economy and local businesses.”³⁵ The Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce explained that “for Cape Cod’s business community, the bridges have a tangible impact on the timeliness of product shipments, staff commutes to and from work, and customer access to their business” and that the top three bridge-related impacts reported by their business members are “1) increased commute times for staff living off-Cape; 2) increased transit times or delays for goods and supplies; and 3) reduced customer or visitor confidence in Cape Cod as a place to do business.”³⁶ According to the Chamber, the current state of the bridges “negatively impacts the ability of businesses to attract new customers and engage in business development outside of the Cape Cod region.” The Chamber specifically described the impact of the bridges on the tourism industry, stating:

Businesses recognize that, for the millions of visitors who travel to Cape Cod during the region’s popular summer tourist season, the bridges are their first and last impression of

our community – and this impression is often a poor one.³⁷

The Town of Bourne added that “Cape Cod is a valued summer vacation destination and large driver of tourism dollars in the Commonwealth. The bridges cause enormous difficulties in those who are arriving and departing the region for vacations and recreation.”³⁸ State Senator Moran explained that “This major economic engine (tourism) is constantly hampered by transportation issues, due to the deteriorating conditions of the bridges.”³⁹ And the Town of Sandwich, in a letter from Shane Hctor, Chairman of the Sandwich Select Board, noted that “The insecurity of the bridges stresses families, employers, and employees and deeply impacts our small business economy.”⁴⁰

The Chamber also specifically mentioned a period of significant maintenance on the Sagamore Bridge in April and May of 2023, which required closing traffic down to “one lane in each direction.” According to the Chamber:

During this time, businesses saw significant impacts to sales and customer volumes, as customers were deterred from traveling over the bridges. Businesses heard from customers who decided to “wait until the bridge work is done” to come to Cape Cod. Year-to-date occupancy for lodging businesses took a downturn in April and May, as compared to the same time periods in 2022...While spring bridge maintenance certainly impacted business volume and visitors, it also affected payroll and the cost of doing business. Overtime wage expenses increased, as drivers and service providers lost countless hours idling in bridge traffic. Poor traffic flow and longer commute times resulted in lost wages, work time, and tardiness for staff. Businesses reported increased difficulty in attracting and retaining staff from communities off the Cape, now an essential part of doing business here due to the prohibitively high cost and minimal availability of workforce housing.⁴¹

State Senator Moran echoed the impacts of the recent Sagamore Bridge construction, which resulted in “several mile back-ups on Route 495, Route 6 (Scenic Highway), Route 6A (Sandwich Road), Route 3, the Mid-Cape Highway, and Route 28 (MacArthur Blvd)” which “had significant economic impacts on several local businesses.”⁴²

The Cape Cod Canal Regional Chamber of Commerce, which works with businesses on either side of the Cape Cod Canal and the shores of Buzzards Bay, concurred with the “detrimental impact on the economy” of continued maintenance, and in addition to the business impacts of the “untenable traffic congestion,” explained that making residents, workers, and visitors wait in traffic for over two hours is also a public safety hazard:

Everyone suffers under this scenario. Community members and families cannot get to their destinations. Businesses are also severely impacted when the bridge is undergoing maintenance. As the prominent local chamber located in Bourne, we hear tragic stories of businesses losing money due to this type of continuous construction...There is no question that truck deliveries, UPS, Fed Ex, and USPS is impacted by the traffic congestion. Deliveries are late [and] residents cannot shop or will not leave their homes.⁴³

Supply chain disruptions due to the state of the bridges “significantly affect production of goods and provision of services,” given that the “Cape and Islands are isolated from other areas of the state.”⁴⁴ State Sen Moran described how two local businesses saw a 50% sales reduction “due to diminished consumer activity during bridge closures” and how two previously-thriving locations of the local Christmas Tree Shops chain closed due to supply chain issues.⁴⁵

The Town of Sandwich stated that their local labor market reports “a 35% increase in business activity [when the bridges are fully open] and a 25% decline when the bridges are under repair,

and that their “local labor market is projected to shrink as housing, transportation, energy and goods and services costs grow exponentially, and bridge insecurity is a concern of significance.”⁴⁶ They also reported a 25% loss of sales in their business district due to delays associated with bridge repair.⁴⁷ State Senator Moran explained how existing workforce shortages are being exacerbated by the bridges:

The Commonwealth is in the midst of one of the worst workforce shortages and workforce retention crises that began prior to the pandemic. Although the Cape Cod communities’ economies flourish during the summer season, our communities are not isolated to the phenomenon currently being experienced throughout the state, as well as the nation. To make matters worse, the state is also amid one of the most extreme housing shortages, which is especially prominent in the district that I represent. Many teachers, service industry professionals, and others employed throughout the region are unable to live in the communities in which they work and spend most of their time. Many of these professionals are forced to commute several hours, twice a day, just to be an active participant in our economy...

Because of the housing crisis on Cape Cod, approximately, 50% of the workforce lives off-Cape, which means that any long-term traffic disruption significantly affects the regional economy, and many workers fear for the safety of their jobs.⁴⁸

The Town of Bourne explained what these impacts actually mean to their residents on a day-to-day basis:

Employees spend more time getting to work and less time being productive. People arrive at work late and in fear of losing their jobs because they can’t get across the bridge in a timely manner. A working parent who has to safely see their children off to school in the

morning has no hope of reporting to their job on time, and the same holds for the evening commute, and children are often picked up late, straining school resources. Employees who have appointments or commitments after work have to leave their jobs early to build in excessive travel times. In addition, the cost of housing on Cape Cod is so prohibitive for most people that much of the workforce must be imported. Those employees who rely on the bridges for their daily commutes are being caused financial and professional harm due to the unreliable condition of the bridges...

Customers cancel appointments because of traffic delays resulting in lost revenue and customers for our businesses. When the bridge traffic adds multiple hours to every trip it hinders our local commercial businesses in providing consistent services, and makes it difficult for customers to access those services. That delay or prohibition severs relationships over time and jeopardizes our community's ability to be a viable location for small businesses to thrive.⁴⁹

The regular closures of lanes on the bridge for maintenance clearly has an impact on businesses that cannot just be measured in terms of monetary value lost, but also in terms of the decreased quality of life of employees who keep the economy moving.

3. The current state of the bridges is negatively impacting residents.

In tandem with the economic impacts of the bridges on local businesses and their employees, residents on the Cape and Islands generally are impacted by the current state of the bridges in their daily lives, with implications for their access to food, goods, and essential services. The bridges today are “functionally obsolete and dangerous” and are unable to “inclusively support the region and way of life in the 21st century.”⁵⁰ The bridges “have no modern safety features such as lane separation, shoulders, and pedestrian or bicycle separations,”⁵¹ making pedestrian and bike access

“limited, inconvenient and unsafe.”⁵² Additionally, the travel lanes are just 10 feet wide,⁵³ “two feet narrower than modern design standards and cannot accommodate the same vehicle capacity as the adjoining roadways - creating bottlenecks”⁵⁴ and causing “genuine fear about traveling over the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges, including fear for personal safety, accidents, and regular delays.”⁵⁵ The bridges also have “little to no ADA-compliance.”⁵⁶ In addition to existing congestion and safety caused by poor design, the state of the bridges requires regular and increasing maintenance which necessitates closures that exacerbate the traffic flow restrictions and congestion problem: by the end of 2023, both bridges will have experienced lane closures for at least two months this year.⁵⁷ The Sagamore Bridge abutments were rehabilitated in spring 2023 and the Bourne Bridge faces upcoming restrictions.⁵⁸ During the Sagamore project, time spent in traffic significantly increased – roughly 420,000 person-hours of delay equating to roughly \$10 million in lost time.⁵⁹ The gridlock was “near continuous for both the morning and evening commutes,” and this is expected to be even worse for the Bourne project,⁶⁰ further inhibiting commerce and access to vital services.⁶¹

The need for increasingly frequent maintenance “while critical to the safe operation of the structures, have a substantial detrimental impact on the lives of Cape Cod residents.”⁶² State Senator Moran described how “The impact of the bridges’ disrepair is clearly demonstrated by increases in congestion and noise pollution, and decreased access to services [with] significant cumulative financial burdens to Cape residents as a result.”⁶³ Senator Cyr explained that these recent and planned partial closures “have caused increased congestion and decreased confidence in the ability of the existing bridges to serve the community,”⁶⁴ and the Cape Cod Canal Region Chamber of Commerce stated that “This is no longer a summer problem - Cape area residents are sitting in Canal area gridlock year-around.”⁶⁵ As described by the Town of Bourne, “in 2023, the residents, visitors and commuters will be subjected

to 4-months of gridlock that is so severe that people are literally getting out of their cars and screaming at each other in the streets. This is in addition to the summer season when the bridges routinely operate at a failed level-of-service. The bridges in its current capacity are obsolete, dangerous, and they both must be replaced.”⁶⁶ The Cape Cod Commission and Town of Sandwich explained how these delays cannot just be viewed from the perspective of time lost:

This does not include the secondary economic impacts, such as the business impacts of employees who were delayed in getting to work or shipments that were late or that went undelivered. It also does not account for the human costs associated with delays experienced by emergency personnel, school buses, and residents. - Cape Cod Commission⁶⁷

The reliability of the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges and the impact of delay and traffic back up due to their inefficiency are daily stressors for our community. The potential for failure places our town and region at risk of decline. - Town of Sandwich⁶⁸

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod also raised concerns about the potential environmental consequences of the ongoing operation of the existing bridges.⁶⁹

These closures affect The Town of Oak Bluffs, which relies on outside resources to “provide for our year-round residents, let alone the influx of tourists during the peak season.”⁷⁰ The Town described how bridge closures “[affect] the availability of vital goods, food supplies, medical resources, and building materials, which predominantly come over via the bridges to the ferry,” and noted that Cape Cod is “susceptible to significant supply chain disruptions whenever there are issues with the bridges, as nearly all goods coming into the region travel over the bridges” via an estimated annual 2 million truck trips.⁷¹ The Cape Cod Commission described

these trips as “necessary for the essential functioning of our regional economy and to sustain our communities” and explained how “our local supply chain has a potential single point of failure – the Cape Cod Canal Bridges [and so issues] with the bridges would have near immediate impacts on the availability of goods for residents of Cape Cod and the Islands.”⁷² Stakeholders, underscored how this affects costs, and the broader quality of life implications of the current state of the bridges. According to the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce:

The cost of groceries, gas, and business supplies are all notoriously more expensive on Cape Cod than in other regions of the Commonwealth, and even more costly in the harder-to-access Outer Cape communities of Eastham, Wellfleet, Truro, and Provincetown. Cape Cod’s auto-dependent, sprawling pattern of development and limited public transit system contribute to residents’ challenges in accessing medical and mental healthcare, education, childcare, and other essential services. Limited service options and high costs motivate many to seek resources off-Cape, across the Bourne & Sagamore Bridges. Repair work and lane closures on the bridges exacerbate these challenges, putting an already expensive, underserved region at a further disadvantage and decreasing residents’ overall quality of life.⁷³

And according to the Town of Sandwich:

Our taxpayers and consumers bear the burden of ‘hidden bridge tolls’, suppliers charge a premium for inefficient time wasted and fuel burned waiting in traffic on the bridges. Basic public health services such as solid waste management are met with delay when traffic is backed up at the bridges, the staff time and hauling costs are passed on to the community. Sixty-two percent of our businesses are small businesses with less than five employees. Many of these business rely the timely delivery of perishable goods which is often delayed.

Our unreliable access to goods results in inconsistent product availability, which is bad for businesses sustainability, and drives up costs to consumers.⁷⁴

The Town of Bourne also described the impacts of the bridges on children's education:

Students waste inordinate amounts of time on the school bus, exceeding state mandated limits, which results in less time on learning, stress and anxiety. The elementary school is on the north side of the canal, while the intermediate, middle, and high schools are on the south side. It's not fair to expect kindergarteners to suffer in excess [of] an hour on the bus each way. Our families and school staff need to be able to travel back and forth seamlessly. We owe our children better.⁷⁵

The Town went on to explain the impact on residents' socializing and community life:

Residents who live near the bridges have severe difficulties getting out of their driveway due to the gridlock; effectively being trapped in their homes and limiting the community's ability to have a fair and functioning society. Our citizens cancel plans and social visits, and worry about when they will be able to get to the grocery stores, pharmacies and other quality of life services without having to sit in traffic for multiple hours...

Our public library is on the south side of the canal and the community building, housing the Veterans Agent, and Recreation and Council on Aging programs, is on the north side. Our residents have trouble accessing these importantly vital community supporting resources. After multiple years of isolation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we are still not able to come together as a community and participate fully in social and civic life because of the burden of bridge congestion. The challenges created by the Bridges only compounds those negative experiences.

The exact financial impact is difficult to project, however more importantly the impact on lives is impossible to comprehensively quantify yet very real. It has been and is taking a toll on our entire community. The residents, businesses and visiting guests for the Town of Bourne and all of Cape Cod are impacted regularly by the bridges. We continually have to adjust our way of life from season to season based upon bridge maintenance schedules and the chain-reaction of traffic gridlock.⁷⁶

The Town of Sandwich also described the negative impacts to residents:

The instability of the Canal bridge transportation network affects every part of our life. Our wellbeing, competitiveness and community health is at risk as long as the Cape Cod Canal bridges remain in their vulnerable and uncertain condition. Thirty-four thousand commuters cross the Bourne and Sagamore bridges daily...The perpetual maintenance of the bridges creates an unease and lack of confidence in the basic safety and efficiency of our transportation network... This last winter, a single vehicle accident at the Bourne Bridge resulted in public works employees and contract services stuck on the mainland during the very early morning hours and unable to sand and plow our local roads. This resulted in local vehicle accidents, losses to our business community, and unnecessary closures of schools and other services.⁷⁷

As stated by the Cape Cod Commission, "The ability of the region's transportation system to meet the current and future needs of Cape Cod's residents, businesses, and visitors depends on safe and reliable canal crossings. An issue with either of the bridges impacts all of the communities in our region. Impacts range from local challenges, like emergency response within the town of Bourne, to regional challenges, like providing reliable movement of people and goods to the

Cape as well as the Islands.”⁷⁸ It is clear that the current state of the bridges is untenable and has far-reaching impacts on the lives of residents.

4. The current state of the bridges impacts emergency services and access to healthcare, and is a public health and public safety risk.

Because the bridges serve as the lifeline connecting the rest of Massachusetts to Cape Cod and are “the only emergency route off of Cape Cod,”⁷⁹ the “gridlock caused by bridge congestion adds a dangerous amount of time to the...ability to respond to emergencies.”⁸⁰ In the Town of Bourne, where “ambulances are routinely dispatched over the bridge responding to people in distress,” this congestion can tack on up to 15 minutes to the average response time. Furthermore, the traffic forces first responders to “drive on the ‘wrong side’ of the road for long stretches to bypass gridlock,” adding additional risks beyond the increased response time.⁸¹

In the Town of Sandwich, which is split by the Canal, first responders “routinely require mutual aid from the Town of Bourne to respond to calls for service due to bridge backups,” because over 11% of municipal employees commute over the bridges to work, including “first responders, police officers, fire firefighter/EMS officers, as well as teachers, public works employees and all other types of municipal employees needed to provide basic community needs and to respond in the event of a disaster.”⁸² The Cape Cod Commission described how some life-threatening risks and emergencies “require transport to off-Cape trauma centers either by ambulance or helicopter,” and that “[u]nder some emergency and critical conditions, the livelihood of residents and visitors could be jeopardized if easy, safe, and quick access to and over the bridges is compromised.”⁸³

In addition to emergency medical situations, even access to routine health care is negatively impacted by the state of the bridges. While many residents can access healthcare services on Cape Cod, due to the limited availability of specialized

medical care on the Cape, Cape and Islands residents must “travel across the bridges to the South Shore or Boston” for doctor’s appointments and to seek medical treatment,⁸⁴ particularly “for some specialty services such as certain cancer care measures.”⁸⁵ As the Town of Provincetown noted, the state of the bridges is therefore “not merely an economic concern but also an equity issue.”⁸⁶

This is especially pertinent given the demographics of those who live on the Cape and Islands, where the aging trend “has been well-documented, with current projections of a continued rise in the number of residents 60 years of age and older through 2035.”⁸⁷ Most towns have a share of the 60 and older residents that is “approaching or has exceeded 50%, almost double the average in the rest of the state.”⁸⁸ These older residents “have greater healthcare needs and utilize services more often” and “with the significant loss of workforce and affordable housing locally to meet the needs of this older population, access to medical services is now at a critical level — especially on the Outer Cape — where the nearest emergency room is nearly 50 miles away.”⁸⁹ The Town of Provincetown further described this phenomenon:

The Cape has a severe lack of resources in healthcare, home care, and behavioral health services, and a serious shortage of primary care physicians and mental health professionals, particularly geriatric psychiatry and medicine. Referrals to specialists result in travel to off-Cape medical practices. Waitlists for home care services in the region are up to a yearlong, due to a lack of workforce...

Emergency medical services are also strained as MedFlight is not always able to transport due to weather and patients must be taken to Boston via ambulance. Safe, reliable access to and from the Cape is crucial to maintaining a sustainable year-round community with an older adult population. The bridges provide a lifeline not only to residents requiring

specialty care or services not available on the Cape, but also in attracting and maintaining access for those who work on the Cape.

Constant construction to repair the bridges has a greater impact on older year-round residents, extending the already lengthy drive to Boston for medical appointments and straining limited public transportation schedules.⁹⁰

The Barnstable County Sheriff's Office noted that 32% of their workforce live off Cape on the mainland side of the bridge, and that they expect that percentage to increase.⁹¹ They warned that the current repair seasons, and future further deterioration of the bridges, would shrink their workforce pool further and could even "result in the loss of current staff," making it clear that "the challenges of commuting to Barnstable County make recruitment and retention even more difficult in this tight labor market."⁹² The Sheriff's Office went on to explain how bridge-related delays impact the wellbeing, safety, and security of their employees and inmates:

The BCSO employs not only correctional staff, but also dispatchers that staff our Regional Emergency Communication Center, Criminal Investigation staff, radio technicians, and administrative staff. The impact of seemingly constant bridge repairs is born[e] by each one of our employees. Our facility operates 24/7 and therefore employees must be relieved by an incoming officer or dispatcher in order for them to be able to leave work. When the bridges are under construction, and commuting delays occur, the result can be forced overtime for the employees that are waiting to be relieved. This then leads to additional costs incurred by the BCSO as well as additional stress on our employees...

Another issue that arises from the constant cycle of construction on the bridges is an increased threat to the security of our facility. When staff who are on-duty are unable to be

relieved on time, it causes a ripple effect on operations throughout the facility and the communications center. With forced overtime, employees who have already worked an eight shift must now stay for an additional 8 hour shift, adding more time onto their workday, eating into their family time and obligations, as well as their crucial off-hours which allow them to rest and reset and come back sharp for their next shift. In a high stress job such as corrections officer or a dispatcher, their time-off is critical to being able to come to their next shift rested and alert, ready to perform the duties of their job..., [otherwise] incidents can occur which can put their lives, the lives of our inmates and the public in danger...

Additionally, transporting those incarcerated to and from court appearances and other facilities is drastically affected by the bridge construction. Oftentimes, we have inmates that are housed at the Barnstable County Corrections Facility but need to appear in court in another county. That always requires an off-Cape transport. With the increased traffic and delays from bridge repairs and maintenance, our transport teams are fighting against the clock to get the inmate to their appearance on time. This causes added stress for both the employee and the inmate and can also cause a backlog at the court...

In summary, the constant bridge construction affects everything from staffing to security at the Barnstable County Sheriff's Office. With the continued strain that is placed on commuters during these construction periods, our workforce is being drastically affected, as is the day to day operations of our facility."⁹³

Additionally, the Association to Preserve Cape Cod underscored the extent to which vulnerabilities of the bridge will be exacerbated in the future due to "the growing impacts of climate change and increased storm intensity."⁹⁴ Due to these increasing climate threats, "a delay in upgrading the bridges leaves Cape Cod residents doubly

vulnerable to catastrophe, especially if a major hurricane requiring evacuation coincides with a period of bridge closure associated with a major rehabilitation.”⁹⁵ As the Town of Provincetown concluded, “Coupled with the impact of climate change, concerns regarding evacuation and other emergency planning are exacerbated.”⁹⁶

Finally, as the Cape Cod Commission noted, the Bourne Bridge is a “part of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Department of Defense (DoD) designated Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) due to the importance for military transportation, national security, and emergency preparedness.”⁹⁷

5. Failure to replace the bridges would be catastrophic.

It is clear from the responses of various stakeholders that the current situation with the bridges is untenable. However, without replacing the bridges, these impacts will only continue to worsen. Stakeholders indicated that, under the current maintenance approach of “fix-it-as-it fails,”⁹⁸ “continued deferred replacement of the bridges will allow them to continue to decay and therefore require even more frequent repairs,⁹⁹ which will necessitate additional short-term reductions to single-lane traffic in both directions and will result in the permanent reduction to single-lane traffic on the bridges in the 2030s.”¹⁰⁰ This will create “unfathomable congestion... impacting the regional economy of Cape Cod as well as the public safety of its residents.”¹⁰¹

These escalating repair needs could force weight limit by approximately 2026 for the Bourne and 2036 for the Sagamore Bridge, which would “severely disrupt the movement of good to/from the region as nearly all major goods travelling to the Cape and Islands are transported over the bridges.”¹⁰² As the Cape Cod Commission described:

According to Army Corps analysis, weight restrictions “would have escalating impacts on

vehicle traffic and the economy of the Cape and Islands as large trucks transporting critical goods and services were replaced by ever smaller trucks. The cost of transporting goods onto and off the Cape would rise over time. More trucks and lesser speeds would result in more frequent and lengthier traffic delays. Vehicle emissions would increase and tourism would be discouraged by these conditions.

If the Army Corps decides the bridge replacement is not imminent, they will have to initiate a major rehabilitation of the bridges in order to meet their current charge and maintain the safety of the structures. This would result in years of significant traffic delays and bridges with all of the same geometric and safety deficiencies that exist today. Major rehabilitation actions over the next 50 years would involve an estimated 480 days of lane closures for the Bourne Bridge and 380 days of lane closures for the Sagamore Bridge as well as 180 days of full closure of the Bourne Bridge and 130 days of full closure of the Sagamore Bridge. The estimated traveler delay costs, not including secondary economic impacts, is estimated to exceed \$2 billion. Weight restrictions and/or major rehabilitation will significantly impact the daily lives of Cape Cod residents and the long-term viability of the region. If a bridge inspection reveals a condition that impacts the safety of the traveling public an immediate closure would have to be initiated. In 2020, the Army Corps of Engineer conservatively estimated that the traffic delay cost that would result from such a closure of the Sagamore Bridge would be \$10 Billion. This does not capture the overall economic impact on the region of such a closure. This type of immediate closure is far from unprecedented for a bridge of this age.¹⁰³

This is made even worse by the fact that projections from state officials show that an estimated “155,000 vehicles will cross the bridges on an average summer day in 2040, an increase of nearly

27 percent” and that tourism will continue to increase, and without “adequate infrastructure to accommodate increased activity,” vehicle congestion and traffic build-ups will worsen, and “other tourist destinations become more and more appealing.”¹⁰⁴

The Town of Oak Bluffs indicated that “The failure to replace the Cape Cod bridges would put our very survival at risk,”¹⁰⁵ and the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce noted that “Should the bridges not be replaced in the immediate future, Cape Cod’s business community anticipates that the impacts would be, ‘simply put – disastrous.’”¹⁰⁶ The Chamber went on to explain:

Because there are no alternate vehicle access points or detour options to get to or from Cape Cod, bridge closures of any length of time would create an unprecedented economic disruption for the entire region. The neighboring islands of Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket, which rely on ferry and air service from Cape Cod for access, would also see significant impacts. We can envision that many businesses would be forced to close their doors, thousands of jobs would be lost, and the cost of goods, services, and housing – already among the highest in the nation - would skyrocket to untenable levels.

Businesses on Cape Cod expect increased bridge maintenance and closures to inflict an overall loss of productivity, efficiency, and staff resources. Anticipated impacts include:

- Higher payroll and overtime costs for staff time spent in traffic;
- Increased commute times for staff, with some employees ultimately opting to leave their jobs and/or not accept work opportunities on Cape Cod;
- Issues with customer scheduling and timeliness of service, resulting in customer dissatisfaction;
- Weight restrictions for trucks carrying essential materials and supplies, leading to

supply chain disruptions, increased freight charges, and loss of revenue;

- Cost increases and supply shortages affecting every project on Cape Cod, including planned sewer and wastewater infrastructure, local transportation investments, and other municipal and county projects;
- Reduced confidence in Cape Cod as a destination and place to do business, with significantly fewer visitors, customers, and business expansion opportunities.¹⁰⁷

The Cape Cod Canal Regional Chamber of Commerce concurred, noting that ongoing future maintenance would “require both bridges to be repaired constantly,” and that if one bridge were to be shut down for repairs or maintenance “the economy of the town of Bourne, the entire Cape, and the state of Massachusetts would suffer tremendously.”¹⁰⁸ They noted that this is a “serious public safety issue for 90-year-old bridges,” and that an “evacuation due to a global threat is another reason the bridges need to be replaced,”¹⁰⁹ given that both options to evacuate Cape Cod in the case of an emergency would be “backed up for miles” in the event of a bridge closure.¹¹⁰ As State Senator Moran described, “We must replace the bridges before it is too late.”¹¹¹

The Town of Provincetown described the impacts of future bridge delays on their local tourism economy:

Over 1 million direct tourism visitors come to Provincetown each year. Any reduction in tourism traffic due to the bridge would be a hardship for small business owners who have recently been recovering from the losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, up to 1,000 hospitality, food service workers, and shopkeepers could be out of work causing lost wages and the ability to pay their bills. The Town itself would also realize lost income from parking revenues and local option meals tax and rooms tax.¹¹²

The Town of Sandwich noted:

Concern for the safety and reliability of the Cape Cod Canal bridges is real — a failure of one or both of the bridges will have immediate and acute impacts on Sandwich...

The continued deterioration of the Cape Cod bridges is unthinkable. During routine maintenance, the northern section of our community, the heart of our business and historic district is routinely paralyzed by traffic backups as much as ten miles from the Sagamore Bridge to the Barnstable town line, isolating Sandwich from down Cape and mainland resources. While this disruptive routine maintenance is planned to continue,

those that use the Cape Cod bridges to meet daily needs are deeply concerned about safety and reliability. We expect that our labor market will continue to contract, impacting health services, public safety and education, and further constraining small businesses.¹¹³

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod also explained how future closures could have impacts to water utilities and the environment:

Delayed replacement of the bridges and the need for closures in order to conduct major rehabilitation of the aging infrastructure could impact the timing and cost of municipal wastewater management construction projects on Cape Cod by increasing the costs of durable goods and labor, given that everything needed for sewer construction and wastewater treatment has to come across the bridges. This would add an even greater financial burden on Cape towns, which are already faced with a substantial price tag to clean up the region's coastal waters and freshwater ponds.

There is also the likelihood that, if the existing bridges remain in place, future disruptions in bridge traffic due to lengthy closures for maintenance and repair would result in economic impacts for the region. These

economic impacts could translate into limited availability of local public and private financial resources used to purchase and protect open space that supports the Cape's remaining sensitive and high priority natural resource areas. Failure to protect such high priority natural resource areas would have an adverse effect on groundwater quality for drinking water supplies, protection of watersheds for freshwater ponds and coastal embayments, and preservation of rare species habitat. It could also limit the availability of local funding for wastewater infrastructure. A major source of funding for that purpose comes from fees from short term vacation rental properties that have the potential to be adversely impacted when easy access to and from the Cape becomes an impediment and disincentive.¹¹⁴

It is readily apparent that the consequences of not replacing the Bourne and Sagamore bridges are bearing down on local communities, who are already suffering under the current states of disrepair. As summarized by the Barnstable County Board of Regional Commissioners, "If the bridges continue to deteriorate and are not replaced, the region will experience devastating economic impacts due to more frequent closures for repairs, disruption of commuter and tourism travel, increased costs for transportation of goods, and lack of critical access to medical and emergency services."¹¹⁵ Replacing the bridges, then, is not just essential but urgent.

6. Replacing the bridges would have significant benefits for residents and the economy.

This replacement stands to greatly benefit those same communities that are currently suffering. According to the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, their members noted that replacing the bridges is "a matter of survival" for their businesses.¹¹⁶ The Chamber stated that "Replacing the 88-year-old, functionally obsolete Bourne and Sagamore Bridges will provide a sense of certainty for Cape Cod's regional economy, which supports nearly 10,000 businesses, a labor force of

117,797, and a \$1.5 billion tourism industry that, in 2022, generated \$181 million in state and local tax revenue - second in the state only to Greater Boston.”¹¹⁷ They went on to describe:

Businesses anticipate that replacement of the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges will result in reduced frustration and aggravation for customers and staff, as well as improved customer confidence in the ability to do business on Cape Cod. With replacement of the bridges, lane sizes will be increased to accommodate modern vehicle widths, allowing for a safer and more efficient exchange of traffic, goods, and services, as well as improved emergency management and evacuation in the event of a significant disaster event...

For the countless Cape Cod businesses that depend on essential employees living off-Cape, replacement of the bridges will leave them better equipped to recruit and retain staff. Businesses and developers will see Cape Cod as a sound investment opportunity, increasing resident access to goods, services, and housing options. Critical municipal and state investments in water quality, wastewater, and transportation will stand a fighting chance of being completed on time and on budget, creating a positive ripple effect for business and quality of life as our region works to modernize its antiquated and deteriorating infrastructure.

The long-term viability of Cape Cod as a place to live, work, and visit is inextricably linked to the state of the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges. ...A fully funded, timely, and well-coordinated bridge replacement effort will restore confidence in Cape Cod’s economic future, while securing the safety and quality of life for hundreds of thousands of residents, workers, and businesses.¹¹⁸

The Cape Cod Canal Region Chamber of Commerce concurred, noting that “Replacing the bridges will completely eliminate the ongoing

maintenance and traffic congestion. Being able to cross the new bridges will reduce the congestion and, thus, contribute to an improved economy... in the long run, the creation of jobs for this enormous project will benefit the surrounding communities.”¹¹⁹

Other communities and organizations weighed in on the benefits of the bridge replacement project. The Town of Bourne indicated that:

Expanding the bridge’s vehicle capacity while enhancing the infrastructure for pedestrian, ADA accessibility and bicycle travel options will offer alternative options for traveling to and enjoying the Cape.¹²⁰

According to the Barnstable County Sheriff’s Office,

Replacing the bridges and eliminating the need for constant construction and upgrades would drastically improve the quality of life of our employees at the Barnstable County Sheriff’s Office...With new bridges that no longer need to have constant traffic-causing maintenance, we expect to see an increased workforce pool as well as smoother operations here at the BCSO.¹²¹

The Town of Provincetown concluded that “Your efforts in securing funding for the replacement of these bridges ensure that our local businesses can continue to thrive, provide local jobs, and allow visitor access to the natural, artistic, and cultural attractions Provincetown offers...The replacement of these bridges will enhance the accessibility to off-Cape medical services for our residents, promoting better health outcomes and a more equitable living experience for all.”¹²²

According to the Town of Sandwich:

Modern efficient bridges effectively designed with an improved interconnected roadway network will fundamentally improve living conditions in Sandwich and on Cape Cod.

Reliability of drive times will improve economic development and sustainability of small businesses...Our business community expects more price stability for goods and services, carbon emissions will be reduced by less idling time on the bridges and road network. In addition to public safety, our labor market will expand with an efficient route to the mainland...A reliable transportation system will reconnect the labor market with Cape employers and increase our ability to recruit and retain qualified employees.¹²³

And State Senator Moran concluded:

[T]he bridge replacements would not only provide greater access to the Cape for tourists and beachgoers, but they will also provide easier access to work for those who are currently unable to afford to live within the area where they are employed. Simultaneously, the bridge replacements will promote job creation and employment opportunities for those living within the surrounding areas... Increasing access to these high-volume tourist locations will promote our local economies and our local businesses while increasing their labor and financial capabilities to function more efficiently and to make necessary repairs to their businesses to promote service.¹²⁴

The Bridge Replacement Project “is essential to the region as it will not only benefit our region socially,

economically, but it will confirm the Cape and Island’s status as one of the most beloved vacation destinations in America...Replacing the bridges will ensure that the regional tourism economy is allowed to fully thrive and flourish.”¹²⁵ We cannot allow for further delay in moving forward with this vital project.

Conclusion

Cape Cod residents and businesses rely on the Sagamore and Bourne bridges for almost every aspect of their lives. The current state of disrepair of the Bridges is already negatively impacting the communities that live and work on and around the Cape – making access to education, medical care, emergency services, and reasonably-priced goods and services increasingly out of reach. Without federal funding to replace the bridges, the situation will continue to deteriorate, causing potentially catastrophic results. Particularly with increased severe weather caused by climate change, the lack of a reliable evacuation route threatens lives as well as livelihoods on the Cape and Islands.

The responses shared in this report make it clear that inaction is untenable. The Cape Cod bridges replacement project is at a pivotal moment, and federal and state actors must come together to secure the funding needed to carry out the replacement and alleviate the current situation that is negatively impacting thousands of residents and millions of visitors annually.



Endnotes

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Cape Cod Bridges Replacement: An Urgent Need

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Cape Cod Bridges Replacement: An Urgent Need

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