

JOHN LEWIS  
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SENIOR CHIEF DEPUTY  
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COMMITTEE ON  
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March 31, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

In light of yesterday's terrible fire and collapse of Interstate 85 in Atlanta, Georgia, I write to thank the Department for quickly releasing initial funds to the State of Georgia for emergency repairs and to express my full support for combined Federal and State efforts to rebuild this vital transportation link for the region.

Interstate 85 (I-85) is a lifeline for the city, region, and State. The damaged section of the highway connects Downtown and Midtown Atlanta with the Buckhead community and suburban areas north and east of the city. We are all thankful that no one was hurt in this disaster; it is a testament to the outstanding response of the area's first responders.

As you know, assessments indicate that I-85 damage is extensive, and this integral part of the highway will be closed for several months. During times like these, it is important for residents, commuters, and visitors to know that the Federal government is not hesitating to assist. For these reasons, I greatly appreciate the initial \$10 million released this afternoon in accordance with the Emergency Relief program of the Federal Highway Administration.

In order to facilitate prompt rebuilding and rerouting, I hope that the Department of Transportation will continue to provide prompt support and resources as needed to the State of Georgia and the City of Atlanta. Plans to provide relief for travelers should also incorporate local public transit agencies and any other transportation alternatives upon which there is increased public reliance during this unprecedented regional crisis.

Again, thank you and the Department of Transportation staff for your service. I greatly appreciate your continued attention and responsiveness to this disaster in my Congressional District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Lewis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the name.

John Lewis  
Member of Congress