



**Testimony of the American Council of Engineering Companies of Pennsylvania (ACEC/PA)
August 24, 2022**

Senate Transportation Committee

Gary Graham, PE

Thank you, Chairman Langerholc, Chairman Flynn, members of the committee and guests, for the opportunity to testify today.

I am Gary Graham, Regional Chief Engineer for McMahon Associates. My testimony will be very brief and will focus on the feasibility of salvaging the engineering design work already performed through the Major Bridge P3 Initiative.

Most of the engineering design work that has been done to date on these nine bridges can be salvaged and used as a starting point for the remaining design effort. The existing plans and specifications may have to be updated to reflect and reference any new design criteria and/or new design and construction standards and specifications since the bridge design stopped but that should not be a big effort. Also, if the engineering firm that completes the design is different from the engineering firm that has done the design to date, then the new engineering firm will need to review the existing design since they will be the official engineer of record for the overall final design but again this should not be a big effort.

Eight of the nine bridges are complete bridge replacements. The one bridge that is to be rehabilitated and not replaced may need to be field viewed again if there is a significant delay in restarting the design to determine if any additional rehabilitation work is necessary. And if there is significant additional rehabilitation needed then it may become more cost effective to completely replace the bridge.

Coordination with the environmental agencies can resume fairly easily however the agencies are most likely working on other projects now and will need to be refocused on this project. The environmental assessment and permits for each bridge may have to be

revisited depending on how much time has transpired between the design stoppage and the design restart. The environmental agencies may require new field studies be performed to provide updated information such as the endangered animal and plant species list for the project. Any permits that have already been submitted may have to be resubmitted with the updated information and the permit approval process may have to start all over again.

Right-of-Way acquisition can resume and should resume as soon as possible since acquiring right-of-way and construction easements are typically a critical path task and so impacted property owners are not kept in limbo.

Utility coordination can resume where it left off. However, it can be difficult to convince the utility companies of the urgency of any utility relocations needed for the project if the project design has been stopped and restarted one or more times. Some additional effort may be needed during final design to gain the utility companies' trust on the new design and construction schedule and have them proceed with any needed utility relocations.

Construction on these nine bridges was to begin in Fall 2023. Every year construction is delayed will require more yearly maintenance work to these bridges to maintain safety and to avoid any long-term traffic disruptions or impacts to the local communities, and the yearly maintenance cost may be significant.

The engineering consultants of PA stand ready to complete the designs for these nine bridges and to design needed improvements to PA's other major bridges. We believe all designs should focus on safety and quality and we promote QBS believing every project should be designed and constructed based on qualifications.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony today. At this time, we would be glad to answer any questions you may have.

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