



DAVE JENKINS
Chair

RITA ORTIZ
Vice Chair

DAVID KLEIN
Treasurer

GRETCHEN GREGG
Secretary

MICHAEL ZALESKI
President & CEO

December 29, 2017

The Honorable John B. Larson
U.S. House of Representatives
221 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Congressman Larson:

Riverfront Recapture, a non-profit organization that has spent more than three decades reconnecting the Greater Hartford region to the Connecticut River, is supportive of your bold vision to reshape the way that people move through the capital region. Your plan, which you presented to the Riverfront Recapture Board earlier this year and has been covered extensively in the local media recently, has the opportunity to transform the way that people look at the river and increase access to our four public parks.

Riverfront Recapture was created in 1981 when volunteers organized to reconnect the river with its surrounding communities. The construction of the flood control system and the subsequent construction of Interstate 91 had cut off access to the river. Your plan to reconnect sections of the city, open up land for redevelopment and decrease the intensity of vehicle traffic along the river has merit and will help Riverfront Recapture achieve its mission of connecting people to the Connecticut River.

Riverfront Recapture believes that the Connecticut River can serve as a way to unite the region. Repurposing the Bulkeley Bridge for local traffic and pedestrians has great potential. Reducing the significant footprint of the two interstate highways will help bring more attention to the river and increase access to our parks.

Your plan also has the potential to open up significant acreage for new development adjacent to the riverfront in East Hartford. Dozens of acres currently used for highway on and off ramps would be available for economic development and recreational purposes.

An additional benefit of your plan would be the repair and replacement of the levee system on the Hartford side of the river. Significant work is currently required to bring the Hartford levee system into compliance with Federal Emergency Management Agency regulations. For many years, Riverfront has advocated for the modification of the dike system south of downtown to improve safety and allow for the installation of a Riverwalk through to Charter Oak Landing. We believe that your proposal will allow for necessary repairs to take place and open up significant recreation and development opportunities in this area.

It is our hope that your proposal continues to receive appropriate review and consideration. We appreciate the opportunity to provide our perspective as this proposal moves forward.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Zaleski", written over a light blue circular stamp or watermark.

Michael Zaleski
President & CEO