



March 7, 2022

Carey Hamilton
State Representative
Indiana House District 87
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2785

RE: I-69 ORX Bridge Project and Indiana Trails Caucus

Dear State Representative Hamilton:

We are writing to express our concern about the current I-69 ORX Bridge Project Design Plan and our hope that the current plan will be updated to make it possible for cyclists and pedestrians to safely cross the Ohio River.

We share the concerns that have been expressed by other organizations, including Indiana Trails and Evansville Trails Coalition, regarding the accessibility of this project and the need for a safe Ohio River crossing in the region for cyclists and pedestrians.

It is critical for our public roads to be accessible to all, regardless of their mode of transportation. Whether an individual is traveling by bicycle or by foot to work, to run errands, or for other reasons, they should not find themselves cut off from key locations simply because they are not operating a motor vehicle. Outdoor recreation and tourism, such as long-distance cycling, has only increased in recent years. Our state will miss out on tourism and recreation opportunities and revenues if we bar cyclists and pedestrians from reaching their destinations.

According to the U.S. Census, 6.4% of Indiana households do not own a vehicle and 32% have only one. Additionally, many Hoosiers simply prefer to ride bicycles or walk to their destination whenever possible.

We should not invest our public dollars in infrastructure that makes it practically impossible for cyclists and pedestrians to safely access any geographic area. It is essential that they can safely cross the Ohio River in this important region.

We ask our decision-makers to revise the current plans to ensure that individuals utilizing all common transportation methods have access and safe methods of travel. Ideally this would mean updating the I-69 ORX Bridge Project Design Plan to include a safe, separated, and protected pedestrian and bicycle lane. A second-choice course of action might be to convert another nearby bridge for cyclist and pedestrian use, but this option would need to be planned in conjunction with the current I-69 ORX Bridge planning and not as a separate project at a later date.



While revising the bridge design may require additional time and resources, this is the kind of opportunity that only happens once in a generation and it is vitally important to get it right. It is worth the investment in our public infrastructure to make it inclusive and accessible. This project, if done well, can significantly enhance the region and expand opportunities.

Thank you for considering our concerns and suggestions. We appreciate all efforts to ensure that cyclists and pedestrians are taken into consideration in infrastructure planning and construction.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P. O'Brien", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrick O'Brien

Board Chair, Bicycle Indiana

Signed on behalf of the Bicycle Indiana Board of Directors