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February 17, 2015

John M. Case, Acting Assistant Commissioner, Government & Community Relations  
NJ DOT  
P.O. Box 600  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0600

Dear Mr. Case:

Thank you for your letter of February 2 regarding NJ noise barrier policy.

All of us agree that money is tight and every dollar spent on highway improvements must be scrutinized and prioritized so that the few dollars that are available are spent wisely.

One way to make our scarce NJ dollars go further is to use Federal funds as much as possible by following 23 CFR Part 772 and the *Highway Traffic Noise Analysis and Abatement Policy and Guidance* of the US DOT. I will refer to the latter document as *USDOT Policy*.

Per *USDOT Policy*, "One management tool that SHA's have found to be essential is a priority rating system... to provide a rational basis for an important part of a very tough decision making process." Michigan is given as an example where a priority factor is calculated based on achievable noise reduction, number of living units protected and barrier cost.

The New Jersey policy you referenced lists just 5 Type II barrier projects and states, "No additional requests will be accepted." Does not such a statement and lack of a priority rating system limit our eligibility for Federal funds?

Per 23 CFR Part 772, "the highway agency shall re-analyze the priority system on a regular basis, not to exceed 5 years." Since the NJ policy you referenced is dated July 2011, we now have the opportunity to correct the deficiencies that limit the full use of Federal funds for type II projects in NJ.

What is the status of the re-evaluation of the current NJ noise barrier policy? I would be happy to review any drafts of revised policy, or even draft a new policy that would maximize the use of Federal funds.

Sincerely,



Paul Kardos