

# Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners

THOMAS A. ARNONE  
DIRECTOR

ROSS F. LICITRA  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

SUSAN M. KILEY  
DOMINICK "NICK" DIROCCO  
ERIK ANDERSON



HALL OF RECORDS  
ONE EAST MAIN STREET  
FREEHOLD, NJ 07728  
TELEPHONE: 732-431-7000

April 22, 2025

The Honorable Christopher H. Smith  
United States House of Representatives  
2373 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Subject: FY 2026 Federal Funding Request- New Jersey, 4th Congressional District  
County Route 537 Corridor Improvements Section B  
Freehold, Millstone and Jackson Townships, Monmouth, and Ocean Counties**

Dear Representative Smith,

I am writing on behalf of the Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners to outline our request for Federal Aid to design roadway safety and capacity improvements along the County Route 537 corridor in Monmouth and Ocean Counties.

The Route 537 corridor is the primary access roadway for several large traffic generators including Six Flags Great Adventure and the Freehold Raceway Mall. Additionally, the corridor serves as a major east/west regional connection between I-195, US Route 9, NJ Route 18 and NJ Route 33. Presently, the corridor carries 20,000 vehicles per day with a single lane in each direction and narrow shoulders. Unfortunately, the communities along Route 537 are facing significant challenges due to recurring traffic congestion and frequent vehicle crashes. This project is needed to mitigate traffic congestion and is supported by the "Western Monmouth Route 537 Corridor Study". Proposed roadway improvements include the addition of travel lanes, shoulders, and medians to improve both traffic flow and roadway safety.

In collaboration with our municipal partners and Ocean County, we are requesting \$2,500,000 to begin the necessary engineering and public outreach. With your support, we are confident in our ability to undertake this critical project to serve the transportation needs of the surrounding communities.

"SEPTEMBER 2d, 1609 THIS IS A VERY GOOD LAND TO FALL IN WITH AND A PLEASANT LAND TO SEE."

Entry in the log of Henry Hudson's Ship Half Moon made after the Dutch Explorer became  
the first European to come ashore in what was later known as Monmouth County

To: Honorable Chris Smith  
Re: Federal Funding Request

Page 2 of 2  
April 22, 2025

We appreciate your consideration of our proposal and look forward to the opportunity to discuss it further. Should you require any additional information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. Arnone, Director  
Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners

cc: Michael J. Fiure, Ocean County Administrator  
Mark Jehnke, Ocean County Engineer  
Mayor Maureen Fasano, Freehold Township  
Peter Valesi, Freehold Township Administrator  
Mayor Albert Ferro, Millstone Township  
Kevin Abernethy, Millstone Township Administrator  
Mayor Michael Reina, Jackson Township  
Jackson Township Administrator  
Board of County Commissioners  
Teri O'Connor, County Administrator  
Joseph M. Ettore, County Engineer

# TOWNSHIP OF FREEHOLD



*MAYOR  
Maureen Fasano*

*TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
Lester A. Preston, Jr., Deputy Mayor  
Anthony J. Ammiano  
Thomas L. Cook  
Alan C. Walker*

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*"Preserving and Enhancing the Quality of Life"*

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April 22, 2025

Honorable Congressman Christopher H. Smith, NJ-04  
33 Washington Street  
P.O. Box 728  
Toms River NJ 08754

RE: FY26 Community Project Funding Request  
County Route 537 Corridor Improvements Section B, Freehold, Millstone and Jackson  
Townships, Monmouth and Ocean Counties, New Jersey

Dear Congressman Smith,

On behalf of the Township of Freehold I would like to offer my full support for Monmouth County's request for Federal Aid to design roadway safety and capacity improvements along the County Route 537 corridor between MP 42.21 (County Routes 526/571) and 48.93 (Gravel Hill Rd.) in the Townships of Freehold, Millstone and Jackson. Currently, this corridor carries 20,000 vehicles per day along a roadway with a single lane in each direction and narrow shoulders. The project is needed to mitigate both traffic congestion and vehicle crashes through the corridor, as previously identified in the Western Monmouth Route 537 Corridor Study. Proposed improvements include the addition of travel lanes, shoulders and medians which will improve both traffic flow and roadway safety.

Thank you for considering Monmouth County's funding request. Freehold Township is committed to working together with the County to improve the County Route 537 corridor to better serve the transportation needs of our community. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Very truly yours,  
FREEHOLD TOWNSHIP,



PETER R. VALESİ, P.E.  
TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR



Mark F. Jehnke, P.E.  
Ocean County Engineer

Sean M. Arcia, P.E.  
Assistant County Engineer

Gregory L. Smith, P.E.  
Assistant County Engineer

Thomas E. Hartman, Jr., P.E.  
Chief Engineer

Lukasz Praski, P.E.  
Chief Engineer

Lynn A. LaMunyon, P.E., PTOE  
Traffic Engineer



**OFFICE OF THE OCEAN COUNTY ENGINEER**

129 Hooper Avenue • P.O. Box 2191  
Toms River, New Jersey 08754-2191

Voice (732) 929-2130

Telefax (732) 506-5182

Road Opening Permit (732) 929-2124

Traffic (732) 349-8165

April 22, 2025

Honorable Congressman Christopher H. Smith, NJ-04  
33 Washington Street  
P.O. Box 728  
Toms River NJ 08754

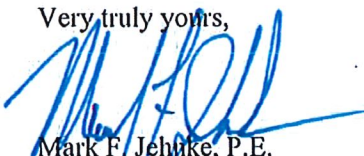
Re: FY26 Community Project Funding Request  
County Route 537 Corridor Improvements Section B, Freehold, Millstone and Jackson Townships,  
Monmouth and Ocean Counties, New Jersey

Dear Congressman Smith

On behalf of Ocean County, I would like to offer my full support for Monmouth County's request for Federal Aid to design roadway safety and capacity improvements along the County Route 537 corridor between MP 42.21 (County Routes 526/571) and 48.93 (Gravel Hill Rd.). The Route 537 corridor is the primary access roadway for several large traffic generators in Ocean County, including Six Flags Great Adventure and Jackson Factory Outlets. Currently, this corridor carries 20,000 vehicles per day along a roadway with a single lane in each direction and narrow shoulders. The project is needed to mitigate both traffic congestion and vehicle crashes through the corridor, as previously identified in the Western Monmouth Route 537 Corridor Study. Proposed improvements include the addition of travel lanes, shoulders and medians which will improve both traffic flow and roadway safety.

Thank you for considering Monmouth County's funding request. Ocean County is committed to working together with Monmouth County to improve the County Route 537 corridor to better serve the transportation needs of our community. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Very truly yours,



Mark F. Jehnke, P.E.  
Ocean County Engineer

cc: Sean M. Arcia, Assistant County Engineer  
Gregory L. Smith, Assistant County Engineer



SPECIAL ASSISTANCE/ACCOMMODATIONS available, please call (732) 929-2130.



## THE TOWNSHIP OF MILLSTONE

COUNTY OF MONMOUTH  
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
470 Stage Coach Road  
Millstone Township, NJ 08510

(Fax) 609-208-2438  
732-446-4249

MAYOR  
Albert Ferro  
DEPUTY MAYOR  
Chris Morris  
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE  
Eric Davis  
Jeff Ziner  
Tara Zabrosky  
ADMINISTRATOR  
Kevin Abernethy

April 18, 2025

Honorable Congressman Christopher H. Smith, NJ-04  
33 Washington Street  
P.O. Box 728  
Toms River NJ 08754

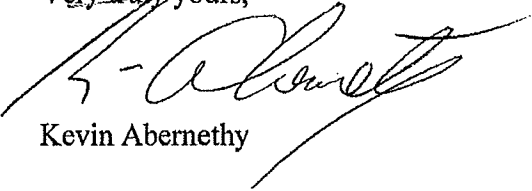
RE: FY26 Community Project Funding Request  
County Route 537 Corridor Improvements Section B, Freehold, Millstone and Jackson  
Townships, Monmouth and Ocean Counties, New Jersey

Dear Chris,

On behalf of the Township of Millstone and all our residents, I would like to offer my full support for Monmouth County's request for Federal Aid to design roadway safety and capacity improvements along the County Route 537 corridor between MP 42.21 (County Routes 526/571) and 48.93 (Gravel Hill Rd.) in the Townships of Freehold, Millstone and Jackson. Currently, this corridor carries 20,000 vehicles per day along a roadway with a single lane in each direction with very narrow shoulders. The project is needed to mitigate both traffic congestion and dangerous vehicle crashes through the corridor, as previously identified in the Western Monmouth Route 537 Corridor Study. The proposed improvements include the addition of travel lanes, shoulders and medians which will improve both traffic flow and roadway safety.

Thank you for considering Monmouth County's funding request. Millstone Township is committed to working together with the County to improve the County Route 537 corridor to better serve the transportation needs of our community. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Very truly yours,

  
Kevin Abernethy



*John P. Kelly, Chair*  
*Charles Kenny, First Vice Chair*  
*David W. Behrend, Executive Director*

May 15, 2025

The Honorable Chris Smith  
2373 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Smith:

I am writing regarding the proposed inclusion of funding for the design and engineering of Monmouth County's County Route (CR) 537 project, entitled "**County Route 537 Corridor Improvements Section B,**" in the next Community Project Funding appropriation legislation.

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for northern and central New Jersey, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) oversees the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). It is our understanding that the House Appropriations Committee requires assurance that any projects funded through the reauthorization legislation that are not currently in the TIP can and will be added to it. This letter serves to provide that assurance.

It is our understanding that the proposed project would address a high-accident corridor, currently featuring single lane one-way traffic that alternatively widens into two lanes going in a single direction, then merges back into single lanes. These mergers create a hazardous situation the Monmouth County Division of Engineering & Traffic Safety wishes to address with this project, which will create two lanes in both directions with shoulders from CR 571 (Trenton-Lakewood Road) near I-195 to CR 524 (Elton-Adelphia Road) in Jackson, Millstone and Freehold townships.

This project is located on a 5.7-mile stretch that is a major thoroughfare between I-195 and State Route 9. CR 537 crosses the state from Camden County through Burlington, Ocean and Monmouth counties. Workers from some of New Jersey's largest employers are located directly on or just off CR 537, including Six Flags Great Adventure, Joint Base McGuire-Dix Lakehurst, Naval Weapons Station Earle in your congressional district, and other large employers.

Please note that CR 537 Section B complements the county's CR 537 Section A project in Freehold. This \$20 million-plus federally funded project is included in the TIP and nearing construction.

The CR 537 Section B project is fully consistent with Plan 2050: Transportation. People. Opportunity., the current long-range plan for the NJTPA region. Plan 2050 encourages investing federal transportation funds to improve safety and to strengthen economic activity and tourism. Given this project's consistency with our long-range plan, the NJTPA would be able to add it to the TIP in a reasonable timeframe should it receive federal funding.

If you require any additional information, please feel free to contact me.

As always, thank you for your ongoing support of federal transportation investment in the NJTPA region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David W. Behrend". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" being more prominent.

David W. Behrend  
Executive Director