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1080 MASON MALL
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CRESCENT CITY, CA 95531

California State Senate



SENATOR
JIM NIELSEN

FOURTH SENATE DISTRICT
REPUBLICAN CAUCUS WHIP

COMMITTEES
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VICE CHAIR
BUDGET & FISCAL REVIEW
HEALTH
INSURANCE
VETERANS AFFAIRS

June 26, 2014

Mr. Malcolm Dougherty, Director
California Department of Transportation
1120 N Street
Sacramento, CA 94273-0001.

Dear Mr. Dougherty:

I am writing to urge you to address issues relating to the so-called last chance grade on Highway 101 about 3 miles south of Crescent City. This section of the highway is in imminent danger of collapsing into the ocean and years of discussion have yielded no answers as to how to deal with this critical safety issue for my constituents.

The last chance grade is on the western slope of a north-south ridge with no alternative access route. This is a active and large rotational slip slide that extends to the ocean 600 feet below. The wave action alone will eventually cut off the toe of the slide resulting in this whole section falling into the ocean. This will be catastrophic to residents cut off from access into and out of the area.

A March 2002 Memorandum of Understanding, entered into during negotiations to convert the Miller-Rellim properties into Mill Creek State Park, acknowledged that a new highway would be built through the new addition to the state park.

In 1987 Cal-Trans identified at least seven alternative routes on the east side of the ridge in stable territory but a lack of significant progress have led to widespread frustration among the community as comment periods have dragged on and special reports have sat idle.

Meanwhile, there are no alternate routes around this area on the west side of the ridge where, in an 8-mile stretch, there are more than 200 identified large slides. It is imperative that decisions be made to move forward.

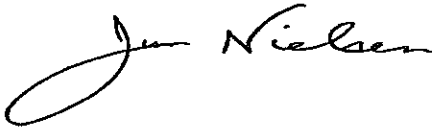
In the last decade alone, more than \$34 million has been spent on repairs in this slide area, which has dropped 8 inches and moved out 11 inches on a quarter mile section in the last year alone. With three distinctive slip zones identified, a catastrophic failure could happen at any time.

It is not a wise or prudent use of state and federal money to keep repairing a road that has been given an "eminent failure" assessment by Caltrans geologists.

I am asking for a current schedule and timeline for route selection, department analysis of economic results of a road closure, environmental documents and a plan for alternate access when this section of Highway 101 fails. Please provide this information to my District Representative, Mr. Scott Feller, at 1080 Mason Mall, Suite 4, Crescent City, CA 95531. He can be reached at 707-464-1255.

A timely response to this inquiry will be greatly appreciated. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim Nielsen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

JIM NIELSEN
Senator, Fourth District

SF: