Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 30, 2018

The Honorable Calvin L. Scovel, III
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Scovel:

We write today to request that your office initiate an audit of the "I-4 Ultimate Project" in Orlando, Florida. The I-4 Ultimate Project, which is partially funded by $949 million in federal Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) funds, is a 21-mile project that seeks to add two dynamic tolling lanes in each direction and reconfigure 21 interchanges.

Unfortunately, it appears that this project is currently running late and requires additional funding. Media reports indicate that the private organization running the project, I-4 Mobility Partners, has asked for an eight-month project extension and another $100 million in state funding which the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will decide upon.[1] This could place the completion date for the project from early 2021 to late 2021. In addition, the credit rating for the project was downgraded by Moody's on June 28, 2018.[2] According to the Moody's report, I-4 Mobility Partners is asking for the extension and additional funds primarily due to drilled shaft failures and issues related to minor flooding.[3] The downgrade could not only subject Florida state funds to additional risk, it may also increase the risk to the TIFIA loans already issued for the project.

In addition to these delays and funding problems, there are also potential concerns about the safety of the project. In April, local media reported that at least one of the bridges in the project had cracks.[4] We also note that the main contractor in I-4 Mobility Partners, Skanska Infrastructure Development Inc. of Alexandria, VA, has also faced allegations regarding cracks in the ongoing Pensacola Bay Bridge project in Pensacola, Florida.[5] This, in addition to ongoing concerns about

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[1] *See* Ryan Lynch, *I-4 Ultimate Project May be Delayed up to 8 Months*, Orlando Business Journal, July 13, 2018, available at https://www.bizjournals.com/orlando/news/2018/07/13/i-4-ultimate-project-may-be-delayed-by-up-to-8.html.

[2] *See* Moody's Investors Service, *Moody's Affirms Baa1 Rating on I-4 Mobility Partners Opco LLC's Senior Secured and Subordinate Facilities; Outlook Revised to Negative*, June 28, 2018, available at https://www.moodys.com/research/Moodys-affirms-Baa1-rating-on-I-4-Mobility-Partners-Opco--PR_385436#b.

[3] *Id.*

[4] See Racquel Asa, *Report Details How New I-4 Bridge with Cracks Was Built*, WFTV, May 14, 2018, available at https://www.wftv.com/news/local/report-details-how-new-i-4-bridge-with-cracks-was-built/749403716.

[5] *See* Emma Kennedy, *Cracks in New Pensacola Bay Bridge Stop Construction, Raise Questions*, Pensacola News Journal, July 19, 2018, available at https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2018/07/19/pensacola-bay-bridge-cracks-twice-halt-construction-raise-questions/799659002/ (noting that Skanska "faces a January deadline to complete the eastbound lanes to earn a $15 million bonus").

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the March collapse of a new pedestrian bridge at Florida International University (FIU),[6] raises serious concern about whether FDOT is exercising proper safety oversight of any of these public-private partnership projects and, in the case of the I-4 Ultimate Project, protecting federal funds from waste, fraud, or abuse.

To protect the safety of Floridians and ensure that federal funds are being appropriately used, we urge you to immediately undertake an audit of the I-4 Ultimate Project. As part of any audit or investigation, we ask that you review all internal communications between the U.S. Department of the Transportation, FDOT, I-4 Mobility Partners, and Skanska Infrastructure Development, Inc. Specifically, we are particularly interested to know if the delays and funding overruns are the responsibility of I-4 Mobility Partners or FDOT, and whether FDOT has taken necessary steps to protect the public interest. Furthermore, given the critical implications your findings may have with regard to the safety of those traveling on I-4 in the Orlando area, we urge you to expedite this review and complete it as soon as possible.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request. We look forward to receiving an update on the status of this matter in the near future.

Sincerely,

Darren Soto	Val Butler Demings	Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress	Member of Congress	Member of Congress

[6] *See FIU Bridge Collapse Probe Focusing on Crack, Investigators Say*, Associated Press, May 23, 2018, available at http://www.sun-sentinel.com/local/miami-dade/fl-reg-fiu-pedestrian-bridge-collapse-ntsb-20180523-story.html.

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