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SENATOR
ROSEMARY M. BROWN
40TH DISTRICT



Senate of Pennsylvania

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rbrown@pasen.gov
SenatorBrown40.com

January 10, 2024

Mr. Charles F. Sams III
Director, National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Director Sams:

This letter is being written to bring your immediate attention to the prolonged closure of RT611 in Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania.

RT611 is owned and maintained by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and runs through the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area in Monroe and Northampton Counties. RT611 is a critical public roadway for residents, commuter and business traffic, and it serves as an emergency alternative for a major interstate, RT80. On December 6, 2022, RT611 was closed due to a rockslide. PennDOT and I worked immediately to secure emergency funding and expedite specialized crews to ensure prompt attention to this roadway.

Understanding the importance of this road, PennDOT has been ready to begin the required work for a year - since January of 2023. **The State of Pennsylvania has made the reopening of this roadway a top priority and we insist this be a priority of the National Park Service as well.**

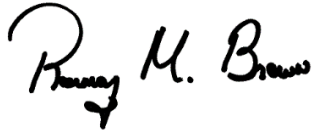
National Park Service officials have yet to issue PennDOT a Special Use Permit, which is necessary to begin the required work. As a state Senator, I acknowledge the need to comply with statutes and regulations. However, I also fully understand the internal importance of prioritization within the bureaucratic process.

This prolonged closure has led to more severe consequences than necessary. Local businesses have suffered, residents are facing increased commute times with limited access to essential services, and public safety concerns continue to heighten. Enclosed are statements from local business owners, residents, and local officials sharing the impact this closure has had on them personally. I encourage you to read each one.

Since the initial road closure over a year ago, PennDOT has been compliant and reasonable throughout the permitting process with the National Park Service. However, the need for urgency and courtesy needs to be reciprocated for the people of this region.

I look forward to heightened attention and an accelerated process from the National Park Service to confirm permitting and begin this roadwork in the best interest of the constituencies we collectively serve. I can be contacted at rbrown@pasen.gov or by calling 570-620-4326.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosemary M. Brown". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a stylized "y".

Rosemary M. Brown
State Senator
40th Senatorial District

CC:

Bob Casey, *United States Senator*
John Fetterman, *United States Senator*
Matt Cartwright, *United States Congressman*
Josh Shapiro, *Governor of Pennsylvania*
Mike Carroll, *Pennsylvania Secretary of Transportation*
Chris Kufro, *PA Dept. of Transportation District 5 Executive*
John Christy, *Chairman of Monroe County Commissioners*
Larry Freshcorn, *Mayor of Delaware Water Gap*