

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 6, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: RAISE Discretionary Planning Grant and the Stitch: Capping Interstates 75/85, Downtown Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing to express my strong support for the City of Atlanta's RAISE planning grant application seeking funding to advance the Stitch vision plan toward implementation. The Stitch, a ¾-mile long 'cap' of Interstates 75/85 in Downtown Atlanta aims to build a reconnected pedestrian-friendly street grid, a new 14-acre greenspace, and a more people-centric built environment that will catalyze new real estate investment to benefit the immediate neighborhood, the City of Atlanta and the entire Metro Atlanta region.

Like many urban centers across our country, Downtown Atlanta's connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods was severed by highway construction during the latter half of the 20th century. Interstate 75/85, one of Atlanta's largest "urban renewal projects," cut right through the heart of Downtown and removed the streets, buildings, and communities in its path. Now, in recognition of the lasting physical and economic effects of this impact, the Stitch seeks to bridge the divide and repair the fabric of the community. The Stitch's identified community benefits are interconnected and extensive ranging from building safe streets that prioritize walking and biking and reducing barriers to economic opportunity to mitigating urban heat island effects and closing the investment gap created by the highway. This integrated benefit approach is exactly what is envisioned by the proposed Restoring Neighborhoods and Strengthening Communities Act.

A detailed planning effort for the Stitch, specifically the work needed to ensure that an investment in the transportation infrastructure to cap the interstate fulfills the promise of a connected and livable urban neighborhood, is an ideal use of the RAISE discretionary planning grant program. The identified scope of work will support robust community engagement premised on inclusive and equitable principles that respect the historic context of the area, along with the technical scopes of work related to transportation, land use, sustainability and parks that will guide the future design and construction.

I am honored to support City of Atlanta's application for participation, and ask that it be given full and fair consideration. If you have any questions about this letter or if I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (202) 224-3643.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. Warnock" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Reverend Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator