



# WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE

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Brett Wallace, Director  
Southeast Regional Office  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation  
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December 23, 2016

Director Wallace:

We were deeply saddened to learn about the death of Christopher Weber, the young man whose truck spun out of control on the Hoan Bridge Monday morning. In the wake of this [tragic accident](#), we wanted to reach out to the Department of Transportation (DOT) to share some of our constituents' concerns about safety on the Hoan Bridge and request your thoughts on how the Hoan might be made safer for motorists.

As the state legislators for the lower East Side and the South Shore, we have many constituents who drive over the Hoan Bridge as part of their daily commute. Some have remarked that the retaining walls seem too short to effectively restrain tall passenger vehicles like the truck Christopher Weber was driving. In fact, we recently heard from one constituent who noticed skid marks and bent guardrails on portions of the bridge, suggesting that other vehicles have come perilously close to tipping over the edge as well. As we are sure DOT staff are well aware, the Hoan Bridge can feature gusty winds, speeding motorists, and slick ice. It is concerning to think that these factors could combine someday to produce a larger accident, possibly sending multiple vehicles over the retaining wall.

We respectfully suggest that DOT explore ways to make the Hoan Bridge safer. Perhaps some options might include adding taller guardrails to the bridge's retaining walls and improving warning signs on the Bridge's sharp curves. Additionally, our understanding is that the 'ramps' of snow created by plowing towards the Bridge's outer walls may have contributed to the accident Monday morning by creating a gradient up the sides of the bridge. Perhaps snowplows should be directed to remove snow from the Hoan altogether when possible. We understand that Milwaukee County takes care of the plowing, but expect DOT could work with County staff to adjust snow removal practices on the Hoan.

We are certainly open to hearing about and discussing other ideas about how to make sure nothing this horrible ever happens again on Milwaukee's infrastructure centerpiece, which functions as an essential traffic route for thousands of drivers every day.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to your response regarding the conditions on the Hoan Bridge and how it can be made safer in the future.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Christine Sinicki in cursive.

Christine Sinicki  
State Representative  
20<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

Handwritten signature of Chris Larson in cursive.

Chris Larson  
State Senator  
7<sup>th</sup> Senate District

Handwritten signature of Jonathan Brostoff in cursive.

Jonathan Brostoff  
State Representative  
19<sup>th</sup> Assembly District