MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Director Joseph J. Resta

From: Kevin Skeels, I-95/Scudder Falls Bridge Improvement Project Manager

Date: June 25, 2013

Re: Explanation of traffic diversion findings identified in EA Addendum document

In light of the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission's June 24, 2013 decision to pursue a Level III Investment Grade Traffic Study for the envisioned Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge and the Commission's current network of seven toll bridges, I am submitting this memorandum to succinctly – and accurately – relay the traffic-diversion findings documented in the I-95/Scudder Falls Bridge Improvement Project's EA Addendum.

The EA Addendum's traffic-diversion depictions are based on work Jacobs Engineering conducted using a variety of data, available resources and industry-standard traffic modeling techniques – including low and high toll scenarios, a common research practice -- to project what the resulting traffic implications would be once a cashless tolling facility (no toll booths) becomes operational at the planned Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge. This research included local roads and the Commission's other "Southerly Crossings:" the Washington Crossing Toll-Supported Bridge, the Trenton-Morrisville (Route 1) Toll Bridge, the Calhoun Street Toll-Supported Bridge, and the Lower Trenton "Trenton Makes" Toll-Supported Bridge.

The findings explained in EA Addendum show that rather than causing an inordinate amount of traffic to divert to and overwhelm these other bridges, cashless tolling of a new Scudder Falls Bridge will actually help to alleviate regional traffic congestion during weekday evening peak driving periods – in the New Jersey to Pennsylvania direction. The EA Addendum further shows that any diversions during off-peak hours will not create new traffic congestion problems on local roads and bridges. The combined improvements from the Scudder Falls project (additional travel lanes, safer ramp entrance and exit conditions) should also reduce regional traffic congestion because more motorists will use the bridge in the free direction (Pennsylvania to New Jersey) during peak and non-peak hours.

Following is a summarization of the traffic-diversion factors that show why a tolled Scudder Falls Replacement Bridge will be an attractive regional peak-period travel alternative:

Traffic currently diverting from Route 1 to Scudder Falls will return to Route 1 – The existing Scudder Falls Bridge currently serves as a diversion route for motorists (truckers in particular) seeking to avoid tolls at the Trenton-Morrisville Toll Bridge. Once a toll is established at Scudder Falls, these current diversions will move away from Scudder Falls to the Trenton-Morrisville (Route 1) Toll Bridge, which will have the capacity to handle this traffic due to the widening project completed at the facility in 2009.

Diverting to other non-toll bridges will be disadvantageous – The Scudder Falls Bridge's two nearest non-toll bridges – Washington Crossing (2.5 miles to the north) and Calhoun Street (4.8 miles to the south) – already exceed peak capacity during weekday high-volume travel periods. Motorists who may attempt to use these bridges to avoid a toll during peak periods will determine that any toll savings will be outstripped by increased fuel cost, lost time, longer commutes, and increased frustration.

An improved Scudder Falls facility will attract new users – The increased capacity and improvements planned for the Scudder Falls Bridge will eventually attract motorists away from the other nearby bridges that are currently over-congested during peak driving times. One reason for this is because the access ramps for the current Scudder Falls Bridge are so accident-prone and congested during peak periods that motorists are using the other nearby bridges as a means of avoiding the Scudder Falls bottleneck. Once a new, improved bridge facility is provided, some of these currently diverting drivers will find the Scudder Falls Bridge a more attractive travel alternative – even with the toll.