

SAMPLE LETTER:

(Note: Please feel free to modify this letter in your own words. Share your love for the Bridgeport Covered Bridge. Most important: Ask them to support funding for the Bridgeport Covered Bridge Restoration Project in the 2014-15 Budget.)

March, 2014

The Honorable Jim Beall
Chairman, Senate Budget Sub 2
Resources, Environmental Protection,
Energy and Transportation
State Capitol, Room 2068
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Richard Bloom
Chairman, Assembly Budget Sub 3
Resources and Transportation
State Capitol, Room 2179
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Richard Roth
Chairman, Senate Budget Sub 4
State Administration and General
Government
State Capitol, Room 4034
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Tom Daly
Chairman, Assembly Budget Sub 4
State Administration
State Capitol, Room 4166
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for funding for the Bridgeport Covered Bridge Restoration Project in the 2014-15 Budget

Dear Budget Committee Chairpersons,

An important California Gold Rush era icon is threatened and needs your help. Our community has worked tirelessly to raise awareness and funding needed to restore and reopen the historic Bridgeport Covered Bridge at the South Yuba River State Park. In 2011 the Department of Parks and Recreation closed the bridge to pedestrian traffic after an engineering survey found severe and unsafe structural problems. Engineers estimate it will cost over \$1 million to restore this State Park landmark, which is the longest single span wooden covered bridge in the world.

I am writing you today to request your support for the complete Bridgeport Covered Bridge Restoration Project. As articulated in the Governor's January Budget proposal, the 5 Year infrastructure plan includes \$1.261 million (\$318,000 in 2014-15 and \$943,000 in 2016-17) to complete the Bridgeport Bridge Restoration Project. This is the full amount that the California Department of Parks and Recreation has estimated for the project.

Phase 1 of the project is funded and is shovel-ready, scheduled to take place in 2014. Phase 2 still needs a technical and design plan prepared and it will be shovel-ready well in time for the 2015-2016 Budget and as such, we seek to accelerate the scheduled funding for this project.

While we are grateful for the Governor's commitment to this project in his Budget, we would prefer to see the \$943,000 that is currently budgeted for 2016-17 be programmed for 2015-16, as this project is urgently needed so the Park can resume contributing substantial funds to the region's economy. Tourism is vital to the Nevada County area, and we can't afford to wait any longer while this project languishes. Should the State emerge from the drought with any significant rainfall, the river that this bridge crosses could rise and damage or even wash away this venerable and historic structure. Time is of the essence in this particular case.

We would ask you support this budget proposal with respect to Phase 1 and request that the Committee move the \$943,000 already intended for expenditure in 2016-2017 to 2015-16.

The fate of Bridgeport, a symbol of California's historic legacy, and a significant engineering accomplishment to the world, is now in your hands. According to DPR, this park attracts up to 890,000 visitors supporting the local economy. We have unanimous support from our local elected officials. The City Councils of Grass Valley, Nevada City and Truckee along with Nevada County Supervisors have all written resolutions in favor of the bridge restoration project urging lawmakers to support this critical work.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

[Your Name and address]