

**PETE HOEKSTRA**

SECOND DISTRICT

MICHIGAN

WORLD WIDE WEB:

<http://hoekstra.house.gov>

113th Congress

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

July 7, 2009

COMMITTEES:

HOUSE PERMANENT  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE  
RANKING MEMBER

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION AND LABOR

Director Kirk Steudle  
Michigan Department of Transportation  
State Transportation Building  
425 West Ottawa Street  
P.O. Box 30050  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Director Steudle:

I am writing regarding the Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) recent decision to dump approximately 10,000 tons of construction waste over the newly constructed service drive designed to provide a new I-75 freeway link leading to the Ambassador Bridge in Detroit.

You may recall that the state's previous decision to allocate federal funding for a \$318,000 turtle barrier struck me as a sufficient basis for further investigating the budget and initiating a broader discourse about the allocation of federal dollars to Michigan. Considering Michigan's near decade-long recession the need for prudently prioritized investment of federal and state transportation dollars is a must. Thus, this MDOT expenditure requires further inquiry.

In the near future, Congress will make decisions on funding a potentially \$80 billion highway trust fund shortfall. The type of funding decisions made by states plays a role in how Congress will allocate transportation dollars in the future. The case for Michigan receiving a fair share of funding is not improved by MDOT spending money to arbitrarily place piles of dirt in the road. In light of the federal taxpayer dollars spent toward funding MDOT more information on this matter is necessary.

As such, I would like to know more about the following:

1. Why was this dirt dumped on this site? Is there a stated-goal?
2. How much did it cost to move this dirt to this site?
3. Why weren't less obstructive, presumably less expensive, orange construction barriers used as a blockade instead of 10,000 tons of dirt?
4. How much will it cost to move this dirt a second time, to another site?
5. How much money will be spent on preparing or repairing the service drive to be opened for use after the dirt has been removed?
6. Has a date been set by MDOT for removal of the dirt?
7. How much money will have been spent on studying alternative sites, dumping and transportation of this dirt to and from this site?
8. Is the portion of the newly-paved service drive where this dirt has been dumped otherwise traffic-worthy? In other words could commuters currently drive on it if not for the dirt?



**WASHINGTON OFFICE:**  
2234 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
(202) 225-4401  
FAX: (202) 226-0779

**DISTRICT OFFICE—HOLLAND**  
184 South River Avenue  
Holland, Mich. 49423  
(616) 395-0030  
FAX: (616) 395-0271

**DISTRICT OFFICE—MUSKOGON**  
900 3rd Street, Suite 203  
Muskegon, Mich. 49440  
(231) 722-8386  
FAX: (231) 722-0176

**DISTRICT OFFICE—CADILLAC**  
210-1/2 North Mitchell Street  
Cadillac, Mich. 49601  
(231) 775-0050  
FAX: (231) 775-0298



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER



9. What economic impact, if any, has the dirt blockade had on commuters, traffic and ultimately commerce to and from Canada?

I respectfully request a prompt response to these inquires and look forward to your correspondence. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pete Hoekstra". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some overlapping letters.

Pete Hoekstra  
Member of Congress

PH/zt