



## **Transportation and Infrastructure Member Day Five Minute Statement**

*Rep. Tim Moore, Wednesday, January 14, 2026*

Mr. Chairman, I'm here today because my constituents are facing daily infrastructure challenges that can be remedied by this committee. From overdue highway upgrades to further Helene Recovery efforts, Western North Carolina needs more investment and federal support to keep our communities connected.

That's why the very first bill I introduced when I came to Congress last year would designate U.S. Route 74 from in Columbus, North Carolina, to Kings Mountain, as a future interstate.

Kings Mountain is my hometown — I've traveled US 74 more times than I could even begin to count, and I know my constituents in Cleveland and Rutherford Counties could say the same. People use it to get to work and to school, it's essential for commerce, emergency services, and daily life.

Despite how important this road is, it's been overlooked for far too long. Traffic and safety concerns keep growing, but the investment and modernization just haven't followed.

That's the problem we ran into in Shelby years ago — the old route sent heavy traffic straight through town, slowing everything down and creating real safety issues for drivers and pedestrians.

When I was Speaker of the North Carolina House, we got to work on the Shelby Bypass to fix that. So now, we've got a

safer, faster route that's already making a real difference for folks in Cleveland County. Traffic flows better, and it's helped take pressure off downtown Shelby.

But that's just one stretch. Designating US 74 as a future interstate allows us to keep building on that progress and bring this entire corridor up to the standard that my constituents deserve.

We need to take this next step unlock those new economic opportunities across Polk, Rutherford, Cleveland, and Gaston counties.

Right now, Rutherford County does not have an interstate within its county lines, which has limited its ability to attract manufacturing and commercial investment.

My bill would help change that and provide an essential east-west connection linking Asheville to Charlotte.

The bill is fully supported by the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and the future interstate designation will allow NC DOT to place signs along the corridor and ensure the road meets interstate standards.

This is a long-needed designation for Western North Carolina that I hope the Committee can include in the Surface Transportation Reauthorization package.

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Mr. Chairman, while improving US 74 will help us build for the future, we can't ignore what folks in Western North Carolina are still dealing with in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene.

I've visited our communities in Lake Lure and Chimney Rock — these families and business owners are still picking up the pieces. They've come a long way, but roads and bridges are still gone. There's still critical infrastructure to be rebuilt.

In the immediate aftermath of this tragedy, the Biden administration's FEMA failed Western North Carolinians. I'll never forget a phone call I received during my very first week in office. A young mother with four children told my staff her FEMA hotel voucher had expired, and she didn't know if her family would have a place to sleep that night in freezing temperatures.

She had done everything right. She called FEMA asking for an extension, but was told they couldn't make a decision because they didn't have the staff to conduct a home inspection to confirm her house was still uninhabitable. My team stepped in and made the calls necessary to make sure her family wasn't put out in the cold.

But the truth is, that story wasn't unique. Under the Biden administration, too many North Carolinians who lost everything fell through the cracks, while at the same time, they were funneling over a billion dollars into housing and transportation for illegal migrants.

That's a complete betrayal of Western North Carolina and FEMA's core mission.

Since coming to Congress, I've made it a priority to change that. I'm proud to work with this administration to not only get Hurricane Helene victims the support they deserve but ensure this never happens again.

I look forward to working with this committee — Republicans and Democrats — to get recovery efforts that still need attention back on track, and reform how FEMA responds in the immediate aftermath of a disaster.

Our federal government can and must do better, and I'm ready to work with you to make sure it does.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.