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February 8, 2021

Representative Randy Boyd &  
Representative Brady Barrington Williamson  
State Capitol 400 High Street  
Jackson, MS 39201

Subject: MS HB 813 regarding Timber Bridges

Dear Representatives Boyd and Williamson:

On behalf of the Mississippi steel industry, I urge you to discontinue support for House Bill 813 that would "REQUIRE CERTAIN NEW BRIDGES AND REPLACEMENT BRIDGES ON CERTAIN COUNTY AND SECONDARY ROADS TO BE CONSTRUCTED OR REPLACED AS TIMBER BRIDGES". This bill is an attempt to favor one bridge material over another and to therefore legislate winners and losers. The selection of structural materials should remain open to free market competition and defer to the judgement of licensed design professionals.

The American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC), along with the National Steel Bridge Alliance (NSBA), a subdivision of AISC, is a non-partisan, not-for-profit technical institute and trade association that has been the leading advocate and trusted resource for the American structural steel industry since 1921. Grounded in unsurpassed science, quality, and craftsmanship, this vibrant and sustainable industry is ever-evolving and constantly improving. That's why for nearly 100 years, AISC has been proud to provide fabricators, engineers, architects, and the construction industry with breakthrough research and innovative solutions.

We were alarmed to see this bill mandate the exclusive use of one construction material for small bridge construction in the entire state of Mississippi. State government should not be in the business of picking winners and losers among competing materials in the construction marketplace. Rather, it is well established that licensed design professionals are the ones charged to carefully select the materials most appropriate to serve in a structure. Materials are chosen based on their functional merits, such as strength, stability, and resilience - not based on special interests passing legislation favorable to one industry. This bill is a brazen attempt to disrupt that freedom and responsibility by legislating positive outcomes for the timber industry to the detriment of all others.

AISC represents nearly 1,000 domestic structural steel fabricators, 11 of which are located within the state of Mississippi and employ nearly 1,000 of the state's citizens. AISC also represents architects, engineers, and other industry professionals in the state, and additional concerned groups representing steel workers in the region are cosigned below.

Sincerely,



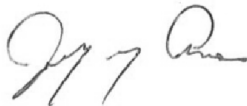
Max Puchtel, SE  
Director of Government Relations and Sustainability  
*American Institute of Steel Construction*



Larry Cox  
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