

October 9, 2017

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Madam Secretary:

As a member of the Board of the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce, a 2,000-member regional economic development organization based in Canton, Ohio, I would like to express my strong support for the TIGER grant application recently submitted by Stark, Carroll and Columbiana counties in Northeast Ohio to complete improvements to U.S. Route 30 through and to the eastern edge of Ohio.

A component of this application is to bypass the city of East Canton to address significant issues relating to heavy truck-trailer traffic which now jogs twice through the downtown roadways. This first step would run from Trump Avenue NE in Canton to Ohio Route 44. It is a four-mile project estimated to cost \$90 million to \$100 million. The entire project is estimated at \$800 million to \$1 billion. The TIGER grant sought by the RTIP would support the necessary first step.

U.S. Route 30 is a four-lane commercial highway from Chicago to Canton, Ohio, and a two-lane, winding and hilly country road for the 32 miles that takes it to the eastern edge of the state and the fringe of the Pittsburgh market. This condition stifles economic growth. It denies a four-lane thoroughfare through the northern counties of the Utica Shale energy development in Ohio. It inhibits the shipment of manufactured goods from Canton, and points west, to the Ohio River port at Wellsville, Ohio. It creates a tourism disadvantage for the \$700 million Johnson Controls Hall of Fame Village under development around the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton. Except for Cleveland, which faces Lake Erie to the north, Canton is the only major manufacturing city in Ohio without four-lane highway access running north, south, east and west.

The completion of these improvements to U.S. 30 to the Ohio border is extremely important to economy and the citizens of northeast Ohio and I sincerely hope that you and your department will grant financial support to this first stage of Route 30 improvement eastward from Canton.

Thank you for your consideration of this recommendation.

Sincerely,



Jay A. Gershen, D.D.S., Ph.D.
President