



BERT DAWSON

Columbiana County
ENGINEER

November 2, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Madam Secretary:

I'm writing to you today to support the application for improvement to S.R. 30 in the area of Canton, Ohio. This project is being advanced by our three County Regional Transportation Improvement Program, which is the first such R.T.I.P. in Ohio.

Growing up as a youngster in the 1950's in the Ohio valley area of eastern Ohio, I experienced a period when the steel mills, railroads, mines, pottery industry and coal plants produced dependable work environments and an unlimited number of well-paying job opportunities. With the loss of the steel industry, this region, much of which is in Appalachia, fell on hard times. Families were divided, as young people moved to more productive areas to secure employment. The depressed condition led to disillusioned people turning to alcohol and drugs, which further defined our area.

As a public, elected official with over four decades of continual public life, I have dealt with on a continual basis the need to maintain a positive tone. In our region, only recently, have conditions begun to change with the advent of oil and gas discovery in eastern Ohio, which has been made possible by fracking. Now we are on the up-swing. Conditions are improving and will hopefully return to those of prior days.

The one major need for this area is a good, safe highway replacing the 1920's Route 30, Lincoln Highway that still exists in Columbiana and Stark Counties. Approval of our application for INFRA funds will be the seed that we need to match other State funding to assure that a new Route 30 will be built. You have the opportunity to completely change the outlook of northeastern Ohio with your support of our application for INFRA funding. This could have a dramatic effect on a lot peoples' lives.

Sincerely,

Bert Dawson, P.E., P.S.
Columbiana County Engineer

