



October 10, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: Support for the RTIP US 30 expressway extension BUILD Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

The Ohio Department of Transportation would like to express our support for the BUILD grant application submitted by the Regional Transportation Improvement Project (RTIP), a public agency serving Carroll, Columbiana and Stark Counties, Ohio for funding under the U.S. Department of Transportation's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program. This project will extend a segment of the US 30 Lincoln Highway expressway east of Canton in Stark County, from Trump Avenue to SR 44. This highway corridor project is important to promote highway safety and will improve access to commerce, trade and quality of life in northeast Ohio.

The RTIP project will have impacts in rural counties in the Appalachian region by improving highway access for freight and traffic movements that support the domestic oil and gas industry production of the Marcellus and Utica shale regions of eastern Ohio. These regions are currently the focus of plans for the major expansion of U.S. domestic sources of oil, natural gas, chemicals and plastics industries which require a reliable transportation system.

The anticipated project will greatly improve safety for trucks by improving curves and tight turns of the existing two-lane US Route 30. It is anticipated that extending and improving the US 30 expressway east of Canton, Ohio would induce traffic through this region rather than parallel routes not designed to handle heavy truck volumes.

I respectfully request that the U.S. Department of Transportation consider the importance of this project with associated improvements for the US30 corridor in northeast Ohio.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jack Marchbanks".

Jack Marchbanks, Ph.D., Director