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Congress of the United States  
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GENERAL FARM COMMODITIES AND  
RISK MANAGEMENT  
DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS,  
OVERSIGHT, AND NUTRITION

January 15, 2014

Governor John Kasich  
Riffe Center, 30th Floor  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215-6117

**RE: *Access Ohio 2040 Plan***

Dear Governor Kasich,

Building and maintaining a safe and efficient transportation infrastructure is essential for Ohio to compete and create jobs. This is especially true in Northeast Ohio, where the recent technological advances have allowed billions of dollars to be invested in extracting and developing the oil and natural gas contained in the Utica and Marcellus shale formations.

In my district, we have already begun to witness the positive economic effects of the shale energy boom. All signs suggest that the energy industry will continue to create jobs and wealth for decades to come. In addition to the direct jobs created, the region's local economies will experience economic growth due to the injection of new capital, demand for products and materials used in the energy industry, and increased demand for housing and services. However, failing to invest in adequate transportation infrastructure could threaten the future of the region and create problems down the road. For example, in North Dakota, the Bakken shale has provided thousands of jobs and dramatically boosted population, resulting in serious transportation challenges. It is important that we make the infrastructure investments today to prevent problems tomorrow.

In particular, Ohio's long-term transportation plans should strongly consider all options to expand Route 30 toward Pittsburgh. Route 30 could serve as the primary artery in Ohio's "energy corridor", connecting Ohio and Pennsylvania through the heart of the shale plays. I strongly urge you to continue your work to study potential routes to continue Route 30 as a modern four-lane divided highway.

Additionally, while I am pleased that Ohio has pursued a freight plan to identify the flow of goods throughout the state, I am concerned that I-77 south of Canton was not included as part of the freight network. While it may be true that traffic numbers do not support I-77 as a major freight corridor, it is important that you consider future projections of freight movement as well as current numbers, particularly given the continued expansion of the oil and gas industry.

Thank you for your consideration of these issues. I look forward to working with you to improve Northeast Ohio's infrastructure to improve the competitiveness of the state and the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bob Gibbs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bob Gibbs  
Member of Congress