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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3507

October 1, 2019

TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEES
RANKING MEMBER,
COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT
OVERSIGHT AND REFORM COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE
ENVIRONMENT

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

Dear Secretary Chao,

As the Representative for Ohio's 7th Congressional District, I am writing to express strong support for the request 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) Discretionary Grant program. This funding would be used to extend a critical US 30/Lincoln Highway expressway segment east of Canton in Stark County, from Trump Avenue to SR 44. This highway corridor improvement project is critically important to promote highway safety, and has broad national implications for improving surface transportation, commerce, trade, and quality of life to benefit rural communities.

A US 30 expressway east of Canton will greatly improve safety, especially for trucks. The expressway will avoid the curves and tight turns of the existing two-lane Route 30, which has concerning safety deficiencies. Because of the increased risk of an accident, many trucking companies refuse to allow their drivers to operate trucks on the existing, winding Route 30. Surveys of these companies indicate that their trucks' use of US 30 westbound from eastern Ohio – and likely from western Pennsylvania and northern West Virginia – would increase if the highway was upgraded.

The RTIP project will benefit rural counties in the Appalachian region by improving highway access for movement associated with goods and services, including commerce related to the oil and gas industry in the Marcellus and Utica shale regions. These regions are currently the focus of plans for major expansion of operation by oil and gas, chemicals and plastics industries, requiring reliable truck access.

Extending the US 30 expressway east of Canton has the potential to pull additional traffic through Stark and Columbiana counties and generate jobs for local residents along its route. I respectfully ask you give this request every consideration. Should you have any questions regarding this proposal, please contact Victoria VanBuskirk in my Canton, Ohio office at (330)-737-1631.

Sincerely,



Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress