



July 31, 2018

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

Madam Secretary:

I am writing you today in support of Gallia County's BUILD grant application for the Appalachian Ohio Infrastructure Gateway Project.

This grant would greatly improve quality of life in Gallia County. Stone and dirt road's unreliability creates constant road closures that can prevent individuals from travelling to their place of work or to receive emergency medical attention. This project would not only replace the stone/dirt roads with pavement, but would provide main line fiber connections for secondary road vehicle testing. Southeastern Ohio is in desperate need of fiber and broadband access and this project would facilitate fiber connectivity to 400 square miles in the region.

Recently, Gallia County has experienced difficult economic times through the loss of area manufacturers and coal-related industry. Gallia County's unemployment rate is 6.8%, compared to the state average of 5.3% in Ohio and 4.2% nationally. This grant would help the county and region take part in the growth our country is seeing nationally.

Sincerely,

Mike Jacoby
President/CEO
Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth