

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 8, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Madam Secretary,

I write to bring your attention to the competitive application submitted by Gallia County to the FY19 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program through the Federal Transit Administration.

I understand that Gallia County, in partnership with the Ohio Department of Transportation, seeks funding for the Southeast Ohio Innovative Smart Connection. This interchange project will develop an east-west "smart" corridor in the Southeast Appalachian Ohio region. It consists of adding an interchange along US 35 while utilizing an existing overpass bridge and four rest-area ramps. Further, the project develops a bypass route for State Route 7 along Bob Evans Highway/Farm Road to alleviate impacts to businesses and residents from flooding.

The Southeast Ohio Innovative Smart Connection also includes installation of two electric charging stations for Over-the-Road trucks and passenger vehicles, development of a smart trucking rest area, and installation of fiber optics to provide a two-lane testing route for the Drive Ohio project along US 35. The project would increase parking capacity for commercial trucks in order to meet resting requirements and ensure safety to the public and drivers. Assistance from your agency would increase infrastructure efficiency, driver safety, access to river ports and rail in the region, and encourage private-public partnerships.

Please give all due consideration to this request. If there are any questions, please contact my Grant Coordinator, Avery Pierson, at (614) 469-6774. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Rob Portman
United States Senator