

O'DELL *True Value* LUMBER CO.

Vine Street at Third Avenue, Gallipolis, Ohio 45631 (740) 446-1276

**Our True Value Hardware
Store Features These
Departments and More:**

July 16, 2018



POWER MOWERS



LAWN AND GARDEN



HAND & POWER TOOLS



ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES



PLUMBING SUPPLIES



BUILDERS HARDWARE



PAINT SUNDRIES



BUILDING MATERIALS

Secretary Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Southeast Ohio Innovative Smart Connection

Dear Secretary Chao:

The Southeast Ohio Innovative Smart Connection grant would provide for autonomous vehicle testing and implementation, providing opportunities here in the heart of rural America that are normally reserved for large metropolitan cities. For Gallia County to obtain this type of access for autonomous trucks and cars, it would enable our County to attract companies to our area in the short term for testing and would also create a route of preferred travel for the foreseeable future. Having charging stations is the "icing on the cake", allowing travel through and to our County by all of the new electric cars and trucks. The results of this high tech project can be and *will be* staggering. One such result will be the attraction of more educated residents, some of which may be employed by the autonomous testing project, while others may relocate to our community due to the fact that our County would have unrivaled connectivity, allowing them the flexibility of working from home, without limitations.

Obtainment of this grant would allow small businesses and everyday people who work from home to do their job seamlessly. Currently, internet connectivity in parts of Gallia County is literally nonexistent. As President of the Gallia County District Library Board of Trustees, I am very aware of the need for increased broadband access in rural Ohio. This need is so great that the public library offers one hundred mobile hotspots in inventory that are loaned out to residents for a period of two weeks, simply through the use of their library card. The need is great and the demand is high. Since the program's inception in the spring of 2017, hotspots have circulated over 2,066 times, with a current wait list of nearly 200 people. With fiber optic lining Route 35, which is located right through the center of our county, the majority of our residents will have the opportunity to connect seamlessly, which will enhance their quality of life and increase profitability of small businesses in rural Gallia County, Ohio.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Jenkins
President
Gallipolis Building Supply Co., Inc.
61 Vine St.
Gallipolis, OH 45631