

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:  
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July 16, 2018

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 to your attention the competitive grant application submitted by Gallia County for funding in the FY18 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Discretionary Grant program.

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 Route 35 while utilizing an existing overpass bridge and four rest-area ramps as well as developing a State Route 7 bypass route along Bob Evans Highway/Farm Road to alleviate costly impacts to businesses and residents from flooding. The project 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 Route 35. The interchange project will increase parking capacity for commercial trucks in order to meet the Department of Transportation's resting requirements to ensure safety to the public and drivers.

The Southeast Ohio Innovative Smart Connection would increase infrastructure efficiency, commerce and intermodal transportation, trucking safety, access to river ports and rail in southern Ohio counties, and private-public partnerships.

Please give all due consideration to this request. If there are any questions, please contact my grant coordinator, Jason Knox, at (614) 469-6774. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Rob Portman  
United States Senator