



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 Southeast Ohio Innovative Smart Connection.

Creation of a smart corridor in Gallia County, in the heart of Appalachian Ohio, would be transformational. This corridor would leverage breakthroughs in transportation technology to bring innovation to a rural community facing challenging economic circumstances. This corridor has the unique potential to be a major proving ground for autonomous vehicle testing in a rural community. This project would also make substantial upgrades to infrastructure in Gallia County, which would provide economic development opportunities by opening up connectivity to land out of the flood plain.

Gallia County is well-positioned for growth, but currently finds itself with an unemployment rate above the state and national average. This project would create new opportunities for economic growth so that employers can take advantage of Gallia County's labor surplus in this time of economic expansion.

Sincerely,

Mike Jacoby  
President/CEO  
Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth