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Transportation Research Center Inc.

May 15th, 2020

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

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am writing to you today to express Transportation Research Center Inc.'s support for the Western Reserve Port Authority's application for funding in the FY20 BUILD Discretionary Grants Program. Funding will be used for the Lordstown Smart Logistics Hub, a strategic infrastructure initiative to capitalize on Lordstown's location at the intersection of multiple modes of transportation, broadband, and electrification, which position the area as the region's premier warehousing and distribution hub.

Investing in this project would help invigorate Northeast Ohio, particularly the Mahoning Valley and Lordstown, areas that have been sharply impacted by economic downturns in recent years. The Lordstown Smart Logistics Hub will be the leading electrified multi-modal freight corridor in the Midwest, integrating emerging technologies – including electrification, automated and connected vehicles – deployed along regional corridors and in a future-focused yard to address industry needs and deliver significant improvements in transportation safety, mobility, access, and reliability.

Transportation Research Center, Inc. (TRC Inc.) is a world-class vehicle research and test facility employing engineers experienced in the areas of driving automation, vehicle connectivity, and powertrain electrification and charging. These subject-matter experts are well suited to provide specific insights on these emerging technologies to assist in the plans, designs, and concepts related to future freight yard applications. TRC Inc. will participate in planning meetings, as well as coordinate stakeholder engagement activities with automotive technology suppliers, to consolidate the needs and design elements of the future-focused freight yard concept. Coordinating a technology demonstration event at TRC with interested suppliers, will allow for physical demonstration and evaluation of these systems, resulting in a short list of candidates for final deployment. Additionally, TRC Inc. will participate in a final concept review to share development of the design concept, gather additional stakeholder feedback, and continuously engage with industry on this project.

Further, the Lordstown Smart Logistics Hub will leverage the existing investment in transportation infrastructure, and the private investment by companies such as the General Motors/LG Chem partnership, Lordstown Motors Corporation, and TJX Homegoods, to name a few.

I urge you to give the Western Reserve Port Authority's grant application your fullest consideration and support as it presents a catalytic opportunity to bring investment to the Mahoning Valley to aid in the region's ongoing economic recovery.

Respectfully,

DocuSigned by:
Brett Roubinek
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Brett Roubinek
President & CEO
Transportation Research Center, Inc.