May 11th, 2020

To whom it may concern:

The purpose of this letter is to express 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 to position the area as the premier regional warehousing and distribution hub. Investing in this project would help invigorate Northeast Ohio, particularly the Mahoning Valley and Lordstown, areas that were sharply impacted by economic downturns. 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 to address industry needs and deliver significant improvements in transportation safety, mobility, access, and reliability.

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) has collaborated with Drive Ohio and its many initiatives toward innovative and efficient automated, connected, electrified, and shared (ACES) mobility systems in Ohio through our role as liaison between Smart Columbus and the Department of Energy with respect to the Smart City grant awarded in 2016. The investment in Smart Columbus has spawned a variety of collaborations and initiatives in other Ohio communities, with Drive Ohio operating as a convener, facilitator and thought leader. The Western Reserve Port Authority's proposal is an example of the thought leadership with respect to ACES technology implementation within the state. If awarded, NREL looks forward to collaborating with the Lordstown Smart Logistics Hub project in a similar manner as we support Smart Columbus. Under the proposed collaboration we will serve as a liaison, connecting the project with the network of electrification, mobility, and energy experts in the DOE laboratory system, providing access to data and resources, tools. Additionally, we would work with the project team to collect data and perform analyses relevant to replicating successes and building from lessons learned for the benefit of relevant DOE research activities.

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 and aid the region's ongoing economic recovery. If you have further questions about NREL's engagement with this activity please contact Andrew.Duvall@nrel.gov.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey D. Gonder
Mobility, Behavior and Advanced Powertrains Group Manager
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