Youngstown
STATE UNIVERSITY

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April 22, 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 in support of the Western Reserve Port Authority (Ohio) application for the FY20 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grants Program. This BUILD proposal will establish the Lordstown Smart Logistics Hub, a high-tech transportation infrastructure initiative which will capitalize on Lordstown, Ohio's strategic location to link multiple modes of freight transportation, expand broadband, and vehicle electrification, establishing a premier warehousing and distribution hub.

This project will provide economic stimulus throughout Ohio, particularly in the Lordstown area that has been recently devastated by the closure of the GM Lordstown Assembly Plant. The Lordstown Smart Logistics Hub will significantly improve transportation safety, mobility, access, and reliability through the establishment of an intermodal rail connection, deployment of autonomous truck circulator routes from rail to warehouse, and consolidation of the current split interchange and construction of a trailer transfer yard along the Ohio Turnpike.

Youngstown State University (YSU) offers affordable and quality higher education for students throughout eastern Ohio. A comprehensive university offering both Masters and Doctoral degrees, YSU students excel in all academic fields. Those benefitting most from this proposal are engineers, logisticians, business professionals, and financial professionals. Establishment of a Smart Logistics Hub in nearby Lordstown significantly increases employment and expands career opportunities for our graduates.

The Lordstown Smart Logistics Hub will leverage prior regional transportation infrastructure investment as well as private investment by GM/LG Chem., Lordstown Motors, TJX Homegoods, Anderson Dubose, FedEx, and several other companies who view Lordstown as a potential world class manufacturing and logistics center.

I request your strong consideration and support of Western Reserve Port Authority's grant application, offering a transformative opportunity to help revitalize the Lordstown area economy, and restore economic prosperity.

Sincerely,

James P. Tressel

James P. Tressel
President

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