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City of Warren

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William Douglas Franklin
Mayor

Eddie L. Colbert
Director of Service-Safety

May 6, 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 my support for the Western Reserve Port Authority's application for funding in the FY20 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation 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 deliver significant improvements in transportation safety, mobility, access, and reliability. Improvements will include an intermodal rail connection at Ohio Commerce Center, an autonomous truck circulator route, consolidation of the current split interchange configuration along the Ohio Turnpike at Lordstown, and a transfer yard for trailers at the Ohio Turnpike Lordstown interchange.

For the City of Warren, Ohio, this project would bring with it the need for a skilled workforce and provide jobs for many who found themselves out of work after the GM Lordstown facility and other ancillary companies closed. These much needed jobs would also replenish the City's income tax base, which has been impacted with the lay-offs of thousands in our area due those closures, as well as the Coronavirus pandemic.

Further, the Lordstown Smart Logistics Hub would build off the existing investment in transportation infrastructure, and the private investment by companies such as General Motors (GM) & LG Chem, 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 federal dollars to the Mahoning Valley to aid in the region's ongoing economic recovery.

Respectfully,

William D. Franklin, Mayor

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