May 12, 2020

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

DriveOhio

The Future of Smart Mobility

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 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 along regional corridors and in a future-focused yard to address industry needs and deliver significant improvements in transportation safety, mobility, access, and reliability.

DriveOhio – an initiative of the Ohio Department of Transportation and the state's center for automated, connected, and electric vehicles and infrastructure – will provide advisory support during planning, use case development, technology demonstrations and deployments associated with this program. DriveOhio will participate in planning meetings and listening sessions with stakeholders from the logistics industry, technology providers, and the public sector. DriveOhio will also engage with DriveOhio Alliance partners – including representatives from government, industry, education, and communities – to enlist additional input and support.

Further, the Lordstown Smart Logistics Hub will leverage 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 investment to the Mahoning Valley to aid in the region's ongoing economic recovery.

Respectfully,

Patrick Smith
Interim Executive Director, DriveOhio