

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 25, 2020

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

Dear Secretary Chao,

We write to bring your attention to the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) federal grant application submitted by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) in partnership with the City of Columbus and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC). ODOT seeks funding for the Columbus Crossroads project, which replaces aging infrastructure in order to improve safety, reduce congestion for commuter and freight traffic, reconnect neighborhoods, and improve access to jobs.

Columbus Crossroads is a \$1.3 billion project being led by the community to transform the crossroads of Interstates 70 and 71, an essential junction which carries commuter and freight traffic across the nation. The project removes a major bottleneck for interstate traffic on these two key commercial routes, improving one of the National Primary Highway Freight System's key corridors. The Columbus Crossroads project is essential to improving the quality of travel for commuters and pedestrians. Further, the project has strong local and state support, as it aims to improve access to services and over 100,000 jobs in the region.

ODOT, the City of Columbus, and MORPC are currently moving into Phase 4 of Columbus Crossroads, which rebuilds four major bridges in order to better connect Central Ohio communities and improve accessibility for pedestrians. Phase 4 also seeks to replace the existing I-70 eastbound ramp, construct a new retaining wall, and create an additional through lane on I-71. These upgrades have the potential to provide additional capacity for vehicles and create opportunities for economic development. Assistance from your agency would allow the Columbus Crossroads partners to continue their investment in this phase of the project and fully reap the benefits of these investments.

The INFRA grant would benefit the entire Columbus region by improving mobility, supporting economic growth, and improving safety. We encourage the Department of Transportation to give this application full and fair consideration and ask you to keep our offices informed on its status. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Rob Portman  
United States Senator