



BOUNDLESS ENERGY™

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Nicholas K. Akins
Chairman, President & CEO

May 10, 2019

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing in support of the City of Columbus Crossroads INFRA Application. Columbus Crossroads is a \$1.3 billion, multi-phase project to transform the crossroads of Interstates 70 and 71 in Downtown Columbus and improve freight movement across Ohio and the Midwest. I write this letter to urge your support for this catalytic project of national and regional importance.

At AEP, safety is our highest priority and we cannot ignore the alarming number of accidents that occur on this stretch of highway in our headquarters city. While it represents only 6% of our freeway system, this stretch of highway sees 25% of our vehicle accidents. It ranks in the top 10 for freeway crashes in Ohio. It is a heavily congested corridor with 130,000 vehicles traveling through each day, including 17,000 trucks. This traffic volume exceeds current design capacity by 50,000 vehicles per day. One of the major attributes of the project is that it will eliminate 95% of lane changes that drivers are currently forced to make, which leads to most of the accidents.

Completion of the Columbus Crossroads project has been identified as a top priority for the City of Columbus, the Central Ohio region, and the State of Ohio. The state recently passed a transportation budget that generates more revenue through higher motor fuel taxes and increased registration fees for local governments and electric vehicles. However, this project cannot be completed without leveraging additional funding from the INFRA grants program. We join other community stakeholders in respectfully requesting that the U.S. Department of Transportation approve funding for this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicholas K. Akins".

cc: Mr. Dan DeBono, Chief Infrastructure Funding Officer, U.S. Department of Transportation

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