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Ohio's 7<sup>th</sup> House District  
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**Representative C. Allison Russo**  
*Minority Leader*  
*The Ohio House of Representatives*

February 28, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing to express my support for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant application submitted jointly by the City of Columbus, Franklin County, and Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) for the Williams Road Multimodal Corridor Planning project, which would be used to develop a concept plan for the entire 6.5 mile Williams Road corridor, from the road's western terminus at the new Great Southern Metro Park, to its eastern terminus at State Route 317 (Hamilton Road).

Williams Road serves as an important east-west roadway in the greater Columbus region and is identified on the Central Ohio Greenway's Trail Vision Plan as a future corridor for significant bikeway and pedestrian connections on Columbus' south side. In 2018, MORPC identified the Williams Road corridor as needing improvement as part of its 2018 Rickenbacker Area Study, due to the projected population and employment growth along the corridor and the south side region. The current roadway is heavily travelled by residents and freight, yet it is only two lanes and lacks any bicycle or pedestrian facilities, which has contributed to multiple traffic fatalities and serious injuries. I believe significant improvements are required to ensure the roadway can safely support the corridor's projected growth.

It is my understanding that this project's impact was recognized during the FY 2022 RAISE Round, when the U.S. Department of Transportation recognized it as a Project of Merit and would significantly improve freight and transportation opportunities along a corridor that includes opportunity zones, areas of persistent poverty, and historically disadvantaged census tracts. It is also my understanding that due to the significant multi-jurisdictional, multi-use, and multi-modal improvements that would be addressed by this project, a RAISE planning grant would represent a significant step forward in the planning process required to create a unified concept for the corridor.

Thank you for giving your full and fair consideration to the RAISE grant application submitted jointly by the City of Columbus, Franklin County, and MORPC, and for your support of similar local infrastructure projects across Ohio.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Allison Russo".

C. Allison Russo  
House Minority Leader  
7th House District