Franklin County
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
1803

David Fink
Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration
US Dept. of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

January 7th, 2026

RE: Heartland Rail Connectivity Initiative – Federal State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Program Application

Administrator Fink,

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners writes in support of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), the Franklin County Convention Facilities Authority (FCCFA), and their project partners as applicants for the Federal State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program (FSP) grant application. The grant application titled, "Heartland Rail Connectivity Initiative", will strengthen the passenger rail network in Ohio and throughout Midwest, revitalize smaller Midwestern communities, promote economic development, and make the transportation network safer and more reliable for all residents. The Heartland Rail Connectivity Initiative requests $6,000,000 in federal funds to analyze the existing utility easements and non-freight corridor right-of-way, conduct the market analysis, and perform grade separation safety studies for future passenger rail corridors. The Project would also conduct a feasibility study for passenger rail service to the John Glenn International Airport and begin preliminary engineering on a proposed rail station at the Greater Columbus Convention Center to serve future passenger rail service.

The proposed Heartland Rail Connectivity Initiative will build upon previous and ongoing passenger rail development efforts in the Midwest while facilitating the implementation of passenger rail service in Central Ohio. The Heartland Rail Connectivity Initiative will supplement the development of the Midwest Connect and 3C+D passenger rail corridors, which are two new passenger rail corridors in Step 2 of the Corridor ID program. Central Ohio is the fastest growing region in the Midwest and will be home to more than 3 million residents by 2050. This growth is supported by major economic development

Commissioners
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projects, including more than $30 billion invested by Intel, Anduril, and Honda.

The Heartland Rail Connectivity Initiative will build upon federal, state and local efforts to revitalize Ohio's urban and rural communities by development of new long-distance and regional passenger rail connections to key economic opportunities while furthering efforts to create a multimodal transit hub in Downtown Columbus. The Franklin County Board of Commissioners is in full support of efforts to develop a new passenger rail service to connect key Ohio destinations and believes that this project represents a commitment and necessary investment in safety, corridor preservation, and economic prosperity. Thank you for your consideration of this important application.

Sincerely,



John O'Grady
President



Erica Crawley
Commissioner



Kevin Boyce
Commissioner