COLUMBUS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

February 17, 2026

David Fink, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

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

Administrator Fink,

As the Columbus Chamber of Commerce, representing more than 2,500 organizations and serving as the epicenter of the Columbus Region business community, we are writing to express our support for the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), the Franklin County Convention Facilities Authority (FCCFA), and their partners in their application for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program (FSP) grant.

The Heartland Rail Connectivity Initiative is a critical component of our region's strategy to drive prosperity and growth by eliminating barriers to success. Currently, Columbus holds the distinction of being the largest metropolitan area in the United States without passenger rail service. This initiative seeks $6,000,000 in federal funds to analyze existing utility easements, conduct market analyses, and perform safety studies to reverse this trend. These efforts will directly support the development of the Midwest Connect and 3C+D corridors, which are essential for our region's long-term fiscal stability and global competitiveness.

Our region is the fastest growing in the Midwest, projected to reach 3 million residents by 2050. This growth is anchored by transformative investments from industry leaders like Intel, Anduril, and Honda, totaling more than $30 billion. To sustain this momentum, we must navigate and implement a modern, multimodal transportation network that connects our workforce to these burgeoning economic hubs.

The proposed feasibility study for rail service to the John Glenn International Airport and the preliminary engineering for a station at the Greater Columbus Convention Center are vital to our vision of an interconnected ecosystem. By convening stakeholders and advocating for this infrastructure, we are ensuring that the Columbus Region remains an exceptional destination for business.

The Columbus Chamber of Commerce strongly urges the Federal Railroad Administration to approve this application. This project represents a necessary investment in safety, connectivity, and continued economic prosperity in our region.

Sincerely,



Derrick R. Clay
President and CEO
COLUMBUS CHAMBER

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