

September 2, 2009

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Federal Funding for the National Gateway Initiative

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I write today to express my strong support for the National Gateway initiative, and to urge you to join in a multi-state effort to secure federal funding for the project.

The National Gateway coalition is seeking funding via the upcoming Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary grant program as well as the federal surface transportation reauthorization legislation. I support this project as a recipient of funding from each of these federal sources.

The National Gateway is a public-private partnership that would create a highly efficient freight transportation link between Mid-Atlantic ports and the Midwest by improving the flow of rail traffic between these two regions. This project is being developed by a coalition of states, local governments, businesses and economic development organizations.

The National Gateway initiative consists of \$774 million in intermodal terminal and rail infrastructure projects that would be divided between the public and private sectors. This investment delivers over \$850 million in public benefits to Ohio and over \$6.1 billion worth of public benefits nationally within ten years.

The private sector has committed to fund 50% of the project and a multi-state effort is being undertaken to secure \$194 million in federal funds. State governments along the route would provide the remaining \$193 million in matching funds based on their share of the clearance work in their respective states.

The National Gateway would provide environmental, economic development and congestion relief benefits across a six-state area, including substantial benefits that would accrue specifically to Ohio.

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The National Gateway's rail infrastructure investments would justify a private sector investment for a new intermodal terminal in Northwest Ohio and planned terminal expansion in Columbus. In addition, the National Gateway in Ohio would:

- Reduce CO2 emissions by over 240,000 tons
- Expand rail market access potential for the State
- Reduce the State's highway congestion by shifting freight from over one million trucks from the highway to the railway, saving nearly \$40 million in highway maintenance costs
- Save over \$100 million in logistics costs for the State

In this time of economic uncertainty, we must take full advantage of these public-private investments in infrastructure to stimulate our economy and deliver high-paying jobs.

The State of Ohio has included the National Gateway initiative in the State's transportation funding priorities and committed \$20 million from the recent federal stimulus package toward the state share of the project.

I respectfully request your assistance in securing the needed federal transportation funds for this project, to see the National Gateway through to completion.

Thank you for your consideration of this important and beneficial project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Armond Budish". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "A".

Armond Budish
Speaker
Ohio House of Representatives