



SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION

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July 10, 2018

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Secretary Elaine Chao
U. S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington. DC 20590

**RE: Gateway 228 Project,
Butler County, Pennsylvania**

Dear Secretary Chao:

On behalf of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC), I am pleased to offer my support for Butler County's funding request through the U.S. Department of Transportation – Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Discretionary Grant Program for the Gateway 228 Project. The requested funds will provide capacity improvements to alleviate traffic congestion, reduce accidents and support economic growth along Route 228, the primary artery connecting rural and suburban residents with emerging employment opportunities in the region.

The SPC is the regional planning agency serving 10 counties across the Pittsburgh region, including Butler County. As the regional forum for collaboration, planning and public decision-making regarding transportation and economic development issues in southwestern Pennsylvania, SPC recognizes the importance of maximizing the efficiency of transportation infrastructure, given today's fiscal constraints and our region's topographical challenges. The BUILD grant will create through lanes and left and right turn lanes along State Route 228 to provide time and fuel savings to area residents, improve air quality and traffic flow, and free-up resources for other critical transportation projects in the region. The planned transportation improvements are consistent with the overarching goal of SPC's long-range plan that, "The region's transportation system will be actively managed and operated to allow the system to function at its full potential." This initiative will improve transportation safety, efficiency and reliability, all key components to creating a transportation system that facilitates economic development and future growth.

Recognizing the regional impact of the proposed transportation improvements, the SPC is pleased to offer full support for Butler County's funding request. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (412) 391-5591. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James R. Hassinger, Ph.D., AICP
Executive Director