

MONTANA
Department of Commerce

Dore Schwinden, Director

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October 17, 2011

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

RE: Port of Northern Montana Multimodal Hub Center

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This letter conveys the Montana Department of Commerce's support for the Port of Northern Montana Multimodal Hub Center, for which the Northern Express Transportation Authority has requested \$9,998,910 in TIGER III grant funding.

Federal funds will be combined with a \$7,346,558 non-federal match that has been committed to the project and dedicated to completing it.

The project has received all required environmental clearances and is in line with our mission to enhance economic prosperity in Montana and promote and enhance Montana's positive national and international image.

No rail facility currently exists in the State of Montana with the ability to ship and receive containerized cargos for import and export.

This project will construct Montana's first multimodal facility to aid in the domestic movement of oversize equipment and the export of value added food commodities and manufactured products—a significant commercial accomplishment for the community, region and State of Montana. This facility will also bring a multitude of family wage jobs to Montana's Hi-Line and northcentral Montana.

As funding applications are evaluated, I hope you carefully consider the merits of this project. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Dore Schwinden, Director
Montana Department of Commerce