

North West Pork Cooperative



October 20, 2011

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

RE: Northern Express Transportation Authority/TIGER III Grant Application

Dear Mr. Secretary,

North West Pork Cooperative respectfully requests your support for the Port of Northern Montana Multimodal Hub Center project.

Pork production in the United States is a vital part of the economy. In 2007, there were nearly 35,000 direct, full-time equivalent pork producing jobs, which helped generate an additional 515,200 indirect jobs. The industry produced nearly \$21.8 billion in personal income from total sales of more than \$97 billion and added \$34.5 billion to the country's gross national product. A total of 1,305,622 metric tons of pork valued at more than \$3.1 billion was exported in 2007.

North West Pork Cooperative produces a superior product, selling only fresh, white pork raised on vegetable-based feed. Constructing a multimodal rail facility in Shelby will enhance our ability to serve valued international markets. Transporting our product via traceable, containerized cargos will help to ensure that our pork is free from contamination and meets only the highest quality standards.

Montana is the 4th largest State in the nation yet it does not have the ability to ship or receive containerized cargos for import or export due to the lack of a multimodal facility capable of accepting and delivering unit trains of containers. Once a multimodal facility is constructed, North West Pork Cooperative will use it to transport approximately 5,050 – 40 foot containers of processed pork to the Pacific Northwest for export to China each year. Project completion would also allow us to begin construction on a planned and designed \$250 million automated pork processing facility next to the proposed rail facility in Shelby.

As funding applications are evaluated, please consider our pledged support.

Sincerely,

David M. Hofer (Board Chair)

David M. Hofer, Board Chair
North West Pork Cooperative
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