



Port of Northern Montana

112 1st Street South

Shelby, Montana 59474

Telephone 406-434-5203

October 19, 2011

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

RE: Port of Northern Montana Multimodal Hub Center TIGER III Application

Dear Mr. Secretary,

On behalf of the Northern Express Transportation Authority, I respectfully request your support for the Port of Northern Montana Multimodal Hub Center project.

We have been working with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, the Federal government, Toole County, the City of Shelby and multiple private stakeholders to develop this important project since fiscal year 1990.

Our project is 100% ready to go. All pre-construction activities are complete. Categorical Exclusions have been received from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Railroad Administration. Preliminary project design has been completed and approved by Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad engineers. A non-federal match of \$7,346,558 has been committed, even though a match is not required since this project is located in a rural community. A federal contribution of \$9,998,910 will complete the project and allow the State of Montana to export and import containerized cargos.

Montana is the fourth largest State in the nation yet we currently do not have the ability to ship or receive containerized cargos due to the lack of a multimodal facility capable of accepting and delivering unit trains of containers.

Federal funds would be used to construct Montana's first multimodal facility to facilitate the export of agricultural commodities and manufactured products—a regionally and nationally significant commercial accomplishment. Montana manufacturers lack the ability to containerize their cargos for export delivery to world markets. The facility as proposed would serve to address this statewide shortfall in export potential.

NORTHERN EXPRESS TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

an

INLAND PORT

Facsimile 1-406-434-2761



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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Byron Kluth".

Byron Kluth
Chairman
Northern Express Transportation Authority