

March 17, 2011

The Honorable John R. Kasich
Governor of the State of Ohio
77 S. High Street – 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Governor Kasich,

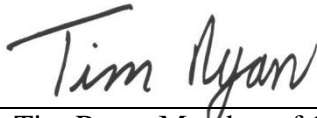
We the undersigned elected officials, business and community leaders urge your support for an emerging public-private partnership which seeks to pursue the planning and development of rail freight and high-speed rail connecting the Cleveland - Akron – Youngstown - Pittsburgh region. The TechBelt Initiative, a consortium of business/industry, research/education and government entities has identified transportation as a key component of the collaborative to improve mobility of the labor force, increase access to markets and provide low-cost supply of materials to and distribution for advanced manufacturing.

Because of the population density of this region (more than six million people in just 130 miles), the large number of students attending colleges and universities (150,000 students, many of whom do not own cars), the presence of numerous local transit systems, four commercial airports, and the large number of active and underutilized legacy rail corridors, we believe this region is well-suited for a more developed rail network. This can and should also be part of a much larger network linking Chicago with the East Coast.

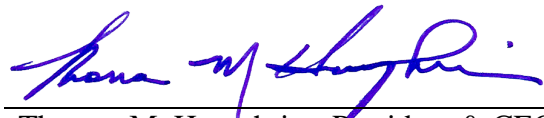
Recent feasibility and economic studies by the State of Ohio show the construction and availability of higher-quality rail services in the TechBelt corridor would create up to 6,000 new jobs, increase household income by nearly \$400 million and boost property values by \$1.125 billion, according to the Ohio Hub System Feasibility Studies begun under Gov. Bob Taft.

In order to advance this project and more fully engage the private sector, we ask for your assistance in pursuing advance planning for this critical undertaking. Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to hearing your views on how we can work together to make high-speed rail a reality in the Northeast Ohio region.

Sincerely,



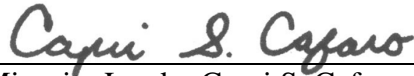
Tim Ryan, Member of Congress



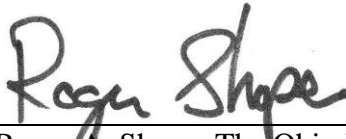
Thomas M. Humphries, President & CEO
Regional Chamber



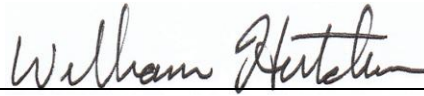
Betty Sutton, Member of Congress



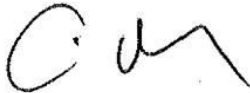
Minority Leader Capri S. Cafaro



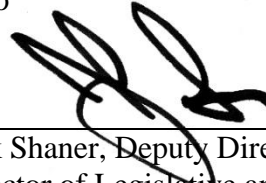
Roger A. Shope, The Ohio Higher
Education Rail Network



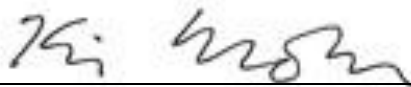
Bill Hutchison , President All Aboard
Ohio



Ari Maron, Partner, MRN Ltd.



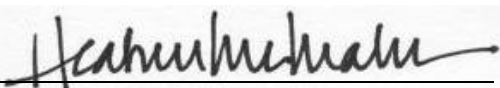
Jack Shaner, Deputy Director and Sr.
Director of Legislative and Public Affairs
Ohio Environmental Council



Kirk Noden, Mahoning Valley
Organizing Collaborative
Ohio Organizing Collaborative



Presley Gillespie, Youngstown
Neighborhood Development Corporation



Heather McMahon,
Cleveland+Youngstown+Pittsburgh
Regional Network



Matt Martin, Trumbull Neighborhood
Partnerships



Phil Kidd, Defend Youngstown