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March 26, 2014

The Honorable Anthony Foxx  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

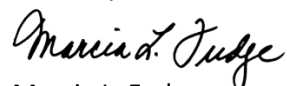
I am writing you in strong support of a recent letter submitted on March 26, 2014 to the U.S. Department of Transportation by Governor John R. Kasich of the State of Ohio. The State is requesting the USDOT to consider a waiver to its Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program. This would allow the State to implement its proposed pilot program for upcoming construction projects within the City of Cleveland and would increase minority business participation that reflects the demographics of the City.

According to recent Census data, the population of the City of Cleveland is 53.3% African-American, 33.4% non-minority, 10% Hispanic, 1.8% Asian, and 0.3% American Indian. To offer an example of a recent DBE participation breakdown on a project in Cleveland, the Innerbelt Bridge phase one reflects a breakdown in participation by DBE-qualified firms as follows: 6% African-American, 56% non-minority women, 3% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 29% Native American. It's clear these figures reveal socio-economic inequity.

As the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) begins implementing a program for the second phase of the Innerbelt Bridge project that will include focused outreach, expanded training opportunities and technical assistance, mentoring programs and reimbursement for some costs associated with becoming prequalified to work on ODOT projects, I urge the USDOT to become a partner with the state and give working families an equitable opportunity to participate in upcoming construction projects that will contribute to the restoration of this historic city.

I am requesting your office to coordinate a meeting with officials from the State of Ohio and my office in order to discuss this waiver to subdivide the DBE goal on upcoming transportation projects. This will give the state flexibility to better reflect the demographic make-up of this community. I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,



Marcia L. Fudge  
Member of Congress

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