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January 28, 2016

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

Dear Secretary Foxx,

I write in strong support of the Niagara International Transportation Technology Coalition's (NITTEC) proposal, in partnership with the City of Buffalo for USDOT's "Beyond Traffic: The SMART City Challenge." This visionary competitive funding opportunity is an ideal fit for the city I represent as Buffalo's resurgence as a vibrant urban center continues to attract national attention as we rebuild on the foundation of our greatest assets. Assets that include our people, diverse neighborhoods, proximity to the fresh, abundant water of the Great Lakes, a shared border with our greatest trading partner, Canada, academic centers of excellence and internationally recognized architecture.

Commitment to technological advancement is also represented by NITTEC, the real-time transportation monitoring and information agency for the city and surrounding region which will identify the smart city vision elements and assemble a dynamic team of industry, university and government partners to ensure project implementation. Joining NITTEC in planning this coordinated, collaborative submission is the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) and the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA), which will serve as the fiscal agent.

In previous centuries, Buffalo experienced the heights of the industrial revolution as home to the first steam-powered grain elevator and as the "City of Light" when Niagara Falls hydropower electrified residential streets during the 1901 Pan-Am Expo. It is only fitting that Buffalo once again reaches for the heights of the technological revolution as we rebound from a prolonged decline following the loss of our large manufacturing base, most notably the steel industry.

I commend your department's stated commitment to provide significant financial resources that "demonstrate how advanced data and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technologies and applications can be used to reduce congestion, keep travelers safe, protect the environment, respond to climate change, connect underserved communities and support economic vitality." This is a challenge Buffalo enthusiastically and energetically embraces as we have more than demonstrated an ability to leverage significant public investment in the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, SolarCity and our waterfront to attract private investment in these employment, educational and tourist destination sectors.

PAGE 2 – Support for NITTEC/City of Buffalo “SMART City” Challenge

We have established a renewed confidence and momentum. This effort to develop and deploy robust smart city technology to ensure our citizens and businesses have direct access to the limitless potential of connected and autonomous vehicle applications can only enhance this momentum.

Thank you for your leadership and your careful consideration of this NITTEC proposal as the City of Buffalo accepts the challenge to earn more than the title but with its selection, once again lead the way in becoming the “SMART City.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian Higgins". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Brian Higgins
MEMBER OF CONGRESS