



September 10, 2009

Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am writing this letter to express the Destin Area Chamber of Commerce's support of the Okaloosa County Tiger Grant application.

The world's largest Air Force Base, the Eglin US Air Force Base, is located in the Northwest Florida Panhandle. Eglin is a center of Armament Research and Development and is a primary installation for Air Force weapons development to include every fighter, bomber, and fighting vehicle in the US Air Force. It is also home to Special Operations Commands of both the Air Force and Army.

Eglin supports major military operations throughout the entire world for the protection of our Nation's Defense, and any compromises to our Nation's Weapon Capabilities Testing, Fighter Aviation Capabilities, and Major Special Operations.

Industries of the region are among a globally-competitive support system for emerging aerospace and defense technologies that also support research in areas, such as electronics and micro-electronics, nanotechnology, composite and exotic materials, advanced power systems, computing, robotics, uninhabited systems, and avionics.

The primary transportation corridor on Eglin is Florida State Road 85 (SR 85); also designated in Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), a statewide network of high priority transportation. The present capacity of the SR 85 corridor is not sufficient to meet the needs of the Eglin mission, nor the needs of the state's SIS system. If additional capacity is not added to SR 85, Mission Critical Operations will be compromised and Regional Economic Development will be stopped.

Okaloosa County, Florida, through cooperative working relationships, has developed a consensus among multiple agencies to develop an overall capacity improvement plan for the SR 85 corridor. As one potential source of support, Okaloosa County is looking to

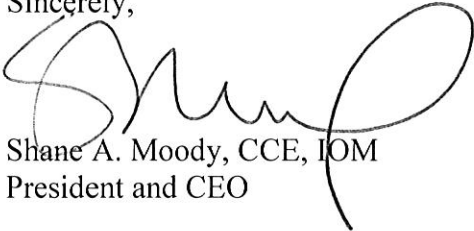
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the Office of the Secretary of Transportation for the award “Grants for Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery” (Tiger Grants). Given support from the Tiger Grant program and with the regional consensus developed by Okaloosa County, capacity improvements along the SR 85 corridor will ensure our Nation’s defense is not compromised and also ensure economic viability of the Northwest Florida Region is maintained.

We appreciate your accepting this letter of support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shane A. Moody', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Shane A. Moody, CCE, IOM
President and CEO