

AARON BERNSTINE
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

438 Line Avenue
Ellwood City, PA 16117



House of Representatives

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Harrisburg

**RE: Gateway 228 – Mars RR Bridge Extension, Butler County, Pennsylvania
U.S. Department of Transportation**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing to offer my support for Butler County's application for funding to the U.S. Department of Transportation to facilitate the Gateway 228 – Mars Railroad Bridge Extension Project. The requested funds will allow for the completion of the final and most costly phase of the larger Gateway 228 project, a comprehensive initiative focused on the State Route 228 (SR 228) corridor. The Gateway 228 project includes SR 228 and State Route 3020, spanning 26.4 miles across seven municipalities and serving as an economic epicenter for the many suburban and rural communities throughout Butler County.

Passing through part of my district, SR 228 is a vital connector for both local communities and the greater region. The funds sought by this application will allow for the successful completion of the Gateway 228 – Mars Railroad Bridge Extension Project, the final portion of the larger Gateway 228 project. Since 2018, the Gateway 228 project has made consistent progress with the support of a 2018 BUILD grant of \$20 million and a 2020 BUILD grant of \$25 million. As of January 2024, ten of the eleven roadway segments which make up the Gateway 228 project have been completed or are actively under construction. The support and mobilization surrounding this project represents a substantial investment totaling \$184 million. Two project sections on either side of the Mars Railroad Bridge Extension Project site have already been completed, and this project will join them while widening SR 228 from two travel lanes to five travel lanes in Cranberry Township, Adams Township, and Seven Fields Borough. This will reduce congestion and travel times in these areas as more vehicles will be able to move efficiently along the corridor with more lane space available. Completing this section of the Gateway 228 project will also allow SR 3021 (Freedom Road) in the west to seamlessly integrate with the newly constructed Pittsburgh Street Intersection Improvement project in the east, covering 3.25 miles of construction.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has recognized Route 228 as an Urban Arterial Highway. As a crucial part of the transportation network through Butler County, it provides a key linkage to Interstate 79, the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and the rest of the nation. Investment in this project and in SR 228 will encourage employment opportunities, economic growth, and improve accessibility to previously isolated locations. If you have any questions regarding my support for this project, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aaron J. Bernstine".

Aaron Bernstine
State Representative
8thth Legislative District
Pennsylvania House of Representatives