



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

April 29, 2024

Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Gateway 228 – Mars RR Bridge Extension Project Butler County, Pennsylvania

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I would like to express my strongest support for Butler County's funding request to the U.S. Department of Transportation for the *Gateway 228 – Mars RR Bridge Extension Project* (Project). The requested funds will support the final phase of Butler County's most urgent transportation initiative – Gateway 228. This multi-jurisdictional, multimodal investment spans State Route 228 (SR 228) corridor, which consists of SR 228 and State Route 3020 (Freedom Road). This 26.4-mile corridor spans seven municipalities and is the heart of economic opportunity for Butler County's suburban and rural communities.

Route 228 is Butler County's primary link between several dynamic economic activity centers – southern Butler County, the fastest growing community in the Commonwealth, and waterway ports in Beaver and Armstrong counties. It is also a critical link to Interstates 79 and 76 (the Pennsylvania Turnpike) connecting Southwestern, PA region to the nation. For 25-years, Gateway 228 had been gradually undertaken until 2018, when Butler County applied for and was awarded 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 in Gateway 228 have been completed or are under construction **for a total investment of \$184 million**. The successful acquisition of FY25 USDOT funding will complete the final segment of this Project that has yet to be funded.

This final segment, known as the "Mars RR Bridge Extension" will connect the previously completed segments and will widen SR 288 between SR 3021 Franklin Road (west) to tie in into the newly constructed Pittsburgh Street Intersection Improvement project (east) totaling 3.25 miles of construction. Investment in Route 228 has significant consequences including the generation of jobs, income and business opportunities, and access to formerly isolated areas throughout the region.

Thank you for your consideration of this important transportation initiative in my District. Please do not hesitate to contact Ashley Megat, in my Erie office with any questions or concern, 814-454-8190.

Sincerely,

U.S. Representative Mike Kelly
16th District, Pennsylvania