



September 5, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing in support of the City of Wilmington's **Rail Realignment Project** grant application for the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Rail Administration Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program.

The rail realignment project will create a new freight rail corridor to re-route rail traffic away from the City of Wilmington and create a more direct route for freight rail to CSX's main rail yard in Brunswick County, NC. This project will improve freight rail safety, efficiency, and reliability while also providing significant safety improvements to private vehicles that currently cross the existing rail track within the City limits.

The project will enhance the connection between the Port of Wilmington and freight customers in the Southeast by providing a more direct access to the Port. Other additional benefits will include local community development and investment, and regional economic development opportunities.

This CRISI application aligns with key local and regional objectives including improved economic vitality by leveraging federal funding and improved rail safety.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "P. Cozza", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul J. Cozza  
Executive Director