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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

April 24, 2014

The Honorable Anthony Foxx  
Secretary  
Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: FY2014 TIGER Discretionary Grant  
Lower Hill Urban Redevelopment Infrastructure Project

Dear Secretary Foxx,

As the State Representative of the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislative District of Allegheny County, I am reaching out to you in support of the Sports and Exhibition Authority's TIGER Grant application, which is being submitted on behalf of the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. Grant monies would be used to fund the infrastructure for the 28 acres site of the former Civic Arena, which was cleared for future redevelopment and is now being used as surface parking.

The importance of the development of the Lower Hill District to the economy of Pittsburgh cannot be overstated. As you may already be aware, Downtown Pittsburgh and the neighborhood of Oakland are the second and third largest economic centers in the state of Pennsylvania. The Hill District, positioned between Downtown and Oakland, is therefore at an ideal location to connect these two centers and serve as an economic catalyst for the greater Pittsburgh metro area.

Tragically, the vibrant, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic Hill District community was cannibalized by federal urban renewal efforts in the 1950s, which resulted in the clearing of 95 acres to make way for the promise of a renewal development that never fully materialized. Over 8000 people were displaced, 1300 buildings removed, and 413 businesses removed from the Lower Hill District. Together with the construction of the Crosstown Expressway, built along the border of the Hill and Downtown Pittsburgh in the 1950s, the Greater Hill District was effectively cut-off from the economic activity of Downtown Pittsburgh.

The TIGER grant application would be used to support the development of infrastructure in the Lower Hill District 28 acres site that will make development on the site possible. It will reconnect the Hill District to Downtown Pittsburgh, the Central Business District of the city, and create traditional urban blocks for development.

One of the main reasons for my support of the TIGER grant application is the promise that future site development offers in providing real community benefits to the Greater Hill District and its residents. The site has the potential to provide job, workforce development, business and ownership opportunities to Hill District residents that will grow and stabilize our beloved community. In rebuilding the Lower Hill District and reconnecting it to Downtown, the current renaissance that is taking place in the Hill District will be strengthened, in the process addressing some of the wrongs brought onto our community from the federal urban redevelopment of the fifties and sixties.

Together with the residents and businesses of the Hill District, I am excited about the prospects of redevelopment of the 28 acres site in the Lower Hill District. It is my hope that you will take into serious consideration the Lower Hill urban redevelopment TIGER grant application, which would assist in providing the funding for the infrastructure that will serve as the groundwork for the planned mixed development on the site.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jake Wheatley, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jake Wheatley, Jr.  
State Representative  
19<sup>th</sup> Legislative District