



September 10, 2009

Honorable Ray LaHood
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority and the City of Fitchburg's joint Wachusett Commuter Rail Extension TIGER Grant application. This project improves commuter and freight rail traffic along Pan Am Southern's, Class I, Patriot Corridor and adds significant economic benefit to the North Central Region of Massachusetts.

The North Central Region of Massachusetts is limited in transportation options. Commuters have the choice of using the very congested Route 2 or the Fitchburg Commuter Rail line whose parking is consistently overcapacity starting with the first train run of the day. The Wachusett Commuter Rail Extension project proposes to create a new station, less than a half mile from Route 2, attracting commuters from a 20 mile radius significantly improving employment options and commutes. In addition to the commuter benefits, this project will aid in providing rail access to industrial areas that are currently stagnant in their development because of lack of freight access. By improving freight access jobs will be retained and created and the tax base of the region will be expanded.

I have every confidence that this project will move forward quickly due to the support of the stakeholders and private partners as well as the environmental work due to be complete this fall. Again, I strongly support this application and ask that you extend to it your full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John W. Olver".

John W. Olver
Member of Congress