

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 27, 2018

The Honorable Daniel K. Elwell
Acting Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Elwell:

We write you today in support of the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) application for the Federal Aviation Administration's Unmanned Aircraft System Integration Pilot Program (UASIPP).

In 2013, the ODOT established the Ohio UAS Center and Test Complex at Springfield, Ohio, tasking it with the core objective of introducing and integrating UAS technologies into State and local governments. In the following years, many State agencies and local governments have come to utilize UAS for traditional operations, such as infrastructure inspection, mapping, emergency response, and precision agriculture. The quick adaptation of UAS technologies into State and local government operations around the State builds on Ohio's existing leadership in integrating UAS into the National Airspace System (NAS) and demonstrates clearly that Ohio has the experience necessary to work closely and effectively with the Federal Aviation Administration, a lead partner in the UASIP

Ohio's UASIPP proposal features two nationally-unique airspaces, both of which possess qualities that can be drawn upon to help accelerate UAS integration and, thereby, strengthen our nation's transportation industry. The first location is a 200,000 square-mile airspace in southwest Ohio that will utilize three individual FAA radar sites for a Ground-Based Detect and Avoid (GBDAA) system. The GBDAA system will function as an air traffic control management system for UAS, complete with a ground station and a controller. The GBDAA technology, which overlaps multiple radar signals to increase accuracy in detection, will help to make this location one of the safest places in the country to operate UAS.

The second location comprises the airspace over Ohio's Smart Mobility Corridor, a 35-mile stretch of highway along U.S. Route 33 in central Ohio, which is currently undergoing transformation into a "smart road." The surrounding area, including the nationally-renowned Transportation Research Center, is already engaging in substantial testing efforts for emerging transportation technologies, such as truck platooning, unmanned aerial vehicles, and vehicle-to-infrastructure connectivity. Under Ohio's UASIPP proposal, the State would leverage this existing innovation infrastructure to integrate UAS with ongoing autonomous and connected vehicle research, in addition to using the technology to map transportation infrastructure, prioritize planning, predict areas of failure and monitor construction projects, all of which will have private sector and government applications.

It is no secret that the State of Ohio has demonstrated national leadership in the transportation arena. In addition to the selection of Columbus, Ohio, as the winner of the USDOT's 2016 Smart City Challenge, the State has made significant investments in transportation research and development in recent years, with a particular focus on autonomous air and ground vehicles, including:

- \$4 million in the Ohio UAS Center and Test Complex
- \$2.5 million in Ground Based Detect and Avoid air traffic control system
- \$15 million Smart Mobility Corridor Fiber Network
- \$45 million in the Transportation Research Center Smart Center infrastructure expansion
- \$5 million to Ohio college and university UAS programs

By working closely with USDOT and FAA, we believe that Ohio can provide the resources and expertise to make a significant contribution to the acceleration and integration of emerging UAS technologies into our nation's transportation system. We hope that you will give full consideration to Ohio's strong application for the UASIPP. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Jack Dolan (jack_dolan@portman.senate.gov) in Senator Portman's office.

Sincerely,



Rob Portman
United States Senator



Steve Chabot
United States Representative



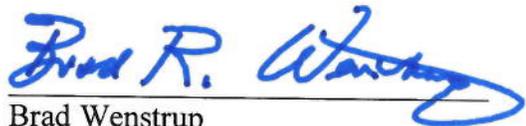
Warren Davidson
United States Representative



Bob Gibbs
United States Representative



Michael R. Turner
United States Senator



Brad Wenstrup
United States Representative

CC: President Donald J. Trump
Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao