



March 14, 2019

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

On behalf of the over 250 trucking companies of the Trucking Association of Massachusetts (“TAM”) and the thousands of trucking company employees who transport goods throughout the Commonwealth, I am writing in strong support of the Massachusetts Port Authority’s (“Massport’s”) Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (“INFRA”) grant application for the Conley Terminal Container Storage and Freight Corridor project in the Port of Boston. This project will further improve one of New England’s most important economic assets, the Conley Terminal, and the last mile connections that link to it.

As you know, TAM has been the voice of the trucking industry in Massachusetts since 1919. One of the oldest transportation associations within the Commonwealth, we represent a wide variety of companies ranging from small, family owned trucking companies with a single truck to large national trucking companies with thousands of trucks. The trucking industry within the Commonwealth is responsible for transporting 87%-93% of all goods and products found in our homes and workplaces. In addition to being a key facilitator for the growth of other industries, the trucking industry is a significant creator of jobs within the Commonwealth. As a recent study by the Dukakis Center for Urban Research & Policy at Northeastern University stated “[t]he overall trucking industry (including private and for-hire trucking) represent about one in 12 jobs or about 300,000 jobs in Massachusetts in 2017. And, trucking companies meet all Massachusetts freight movement needs.” (“The Importance of the Trucking Industry to the Massachusetts Economy”, Pritchard, R. & Scott, A., (May 2018)).

The working Port of Boston is home to 7,000 jobs and generates \$4.6 billion of annual economic impact. A significant part of that economic value comes from Conley Terminal and the region’s 1,600 businesses, including 260 rural businesses, who use the facility to import and export their goods. However, after four consecutive years of record volume growth, including a 10% increase in 2018, the Conley Container Terminal is facing mounting container storage capacity constraints. As a result, Massport has taken the initiative to work towards the rehabilitation of a vacant terminal area to increase the terminal’s container storage capacity by almost 30% while adding innovative technologies to improve safety and customer experience. The project will further strengthen the Conley Terminal’s role as a central entry-point for goods to the New England region.

From a public safety and efficiency perspective, it should be noted that Massport’s application also includes the construction of the Cypher-E Freight Corridor to improve inland container movements and regional distribution while increasing roadway safety. This commitment to improve last-mile connections will separate trucks from mixed-use traffic in a key corridor for pedestrian, bicycle and passenger vehicle traffic. This is vitally important for the trucking industry and local, residential community.

I appreciate your consideration of this important matter and respectfully request your support for this important grant application. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,

Kevin Weeks
Executive Director