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RANDY RICHARDVILLE
SENATE MAJORITY LEADER
THE MICHIGAN SENATE

May 29, 2012

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
United States Department of
Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Peter M. Rogoff
Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
East Building, 4th Floor
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: M-1 Rail

Dear Secretary LaHood and Administrator Rogoff:

We, the majority and minority leaders in the Michigan Senate, are writing to express our common support for the M-1 Rail project in downtown Detroit, Michigan. Specifically, we enthusiastically support the application of the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments for a $25 million TIGER IV grant to help fund this project. We believe that the M-1 Rail project, and the transit oriented development that it is expected to generate, are vital not only to turn around Detroit but also to boost Southeast Michigan. We believe it is critically important that this opportunity for a unique and groundbreaking public-private partnership does not slip away.

We also believe that the excitement generated by the M-1 Rail project, taken with the local match possibilities of the $100+ million private investment and the operational synergies presented, will be powerful catalysts for the enactment of legislation establishing a regional transit authority for Southeast Michigan. As leaders in the Michigan Legislature, we recognize that Southeast Michigan needs to address pressing transit issues from a regional perspective. As you know, the administration of Governor Rick Snyder has come to the same conclusion. While the regional transit authority legislation currently pending in the Senate may not move forward this month due to our priority to pass the state budget, we are determined to work toward a legislative solution on the regional transit issue during this session of the Legislature. The M-1 Rail project provides additional compelling reasons to do so.

Cont.

We appreciate the support that the United States Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration have shown Michigan to date, and look forward to a day in the near future when our federal partners can help our State address transit issues hand-in-hand with a Southeast Michigan Regional Transit Authority.

Respectfully submitted,

Senate Majority Leader
Randy Richardville

Senate Democratic Leader
Gretchen Whitmer

cc: Governor Rick Snyder
Mayor Dave Bing
Roger Penske
Dan Gilbert
Rip Rapson
Matt Cullen