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The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

**LETTER OF SUPPORT – TXDOT’S TIGER II GRANT APPLICATION:
TOWER 55 MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

Dear Secretary LaHood,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Texas Department of Transportation’s (TXDOT) application for Tiger II discretionary funds to support the Tower 55 Multimodal Improvement Project. With its potential for immediate job creation and long term economic, energy, environmental and safety benefits, RILA believes the project is well positioned to compete for federal funding.

RILA is the trade association of the world’s largest and most innovative retail companies. RILA members include more than 200 retailers, product manufacturers, and service suppliers, which together account for more than \$1.5 trillion in annual sales, millions of American jobs and more than 100,000 stores, manufacturing facilities and distribution centers domestically and abroad.

Tower 55, in Fort Worth, TX, is a critically important freight and passenger rail gateway located along a key transportation trade corridor connecting the United States, Mexico and Canada. It has also become one of the most congested rail chokepoints in the nation’s supply chain. Eleven major freight and passenger rail lines from across the country converge at Tower 55 into a single, four way at-grade intersection. More than 100 passenger and freight trains must travel through the intersection on peak days, with over 200 million tons of freight moving between North American markets each year.

As proposed by TXDOT, and in partnership with BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Amtrak, the City of Fort Worth, the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and the Fort Worth Transit Authority, the Tower 55 project will simultaneously address a number of key challenges for the local community, state and surrounding region. It will greatly enhance rail

and motorist transportation flows through and around the intersection; address community safety and livability concerns; and promote national goals of energy savings and environmental conservation. The project embodies a successful public private partnership, taking a carefully studied approach to achieve the shared long term objectives of all stakeholders in this investment. TXDOT has made Tower 55 the highest priority infrastructure funding project in the state.

In conclusion, RILA strongly urges your favorable consideration of the Tower 55 Multimodal Improvement Project application for TIGER II Discretionary Grant funding. We appreciate this opportunity to express our support for this project. Please feel free to contact me at (703) 600-2064 with any questions.

Sincerely,

Kelly D. Kolb
Vice President, Global Supply Chain Policy
RILA