



March 14, 2012

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

**RE: Support for the joint City of Oakland and Port of Oakland's TIGER 2012 Grant Application**

Dear Secretary LaHood:

On behalf of Pacific Merchant Shipping Association, I am pleased to offer my support for the Port of Oakland and City of Oakland TIGER 2012 grant application to convert the former Oakland Army Base (OAB) into a thriving Trade and Logistics Center by developing the Port's Phase I Intermodal Rail Project.

It has been more than ten years since the Oakland Army Base was decommissioned and is way past due for economic redevelopment. The proposed \$20 million TIGER 2012 grant application will help to facilitate a nearly four-fold expansion in rail cargo transfer capacity by building additional rail access in the OAB area. The total project cost is \$43 million, and this investment will complement the ongoing development plans and goals for the joint City of Oakland and Port of Oakland plans to install new trade infrastructure and prepare the OAB site for additional trade and logistics development. This rail project will make access to the Port more efficient for existing shippers and solidify the Port's position as a premier export gateway for a range of intermodal and commodity types.

In addition, this project will allow enhanced intermodal and bulk transfer capacity for the Port of Oakland, substantial emissions reduction due to expanded use of rail, and a significant increase in the economic competitiveness of the Port and the region. Hundreds of near-term construction and long-term permanent job opportunities present a compelling vision for a community that is experiencing sustained unemployment and is eager to see the ongoing development plans for the former Oakland Army Base realized in the near future.

Again, I am pleased to convey my support for this application and ask that you give it your full consideration under the TIGER 2012 grant competition.

Sincerely,

John R. McLaurin  
President

cc: Port of Oakland