

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 30, 2014

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

Dear Secretary Foxx:

We write in support of the regional University Transportation Center (UTC) proposal submitted by the University of Washington (UW) in collaboration with Washington State University (WSU), University of Idaho (UI), University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), and Oregon State University (OSU). The Pacific Northwest Transportation Center, or PacTrans, proposes to continue serving as the Region 10 UTC, with a research and educational focus on safe and sustainable solutions for the diverse transportation needs of the Pacific Northwest. The work of PacTrans will help improve the safety of users (drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists), make infrastructure safer (bridges, tunnels, infrastructure design, and safety hardware), and enhance safe system operations (signal control, variable message signs, operational strategies, and policies) in Region 10.

The PacTrans focus reflects the strengths of the region and the consortium members. The diverse geography and climate of the Pacific Northwest results in unique transportation challenges related to infrastructure conditions, shared use, and safe operations. Specific research efforts will address critical regional transportation safety issues identified by participants from transportation agencies, industries, and research institutions of all four states at the Region 10 Transportation Safety Workshop, including performance evaluation of safety projects and safe travel on mixed use roads. In addition, research conducted by all five universities on data-driven advanced technology solutions to transportation safety problems will be key to the work of the Center. PacTrans will use a variety of metrics to measure the performance of technology transfer activities, including the number of new tools, technologies, procedures, guidelines, and policies resulting from its research, the quantity of patents filed, and number of agency and industry partners involved in specific technology transfer activities. The Center will advance transportation safety and technology through education and outreach activities, and will focus on transportation workforce development, building the next generation of transportation leaders in the northwest region and the nation.

The UW is well-suited to continue leading a regional center, given its past leadership of PacTrans and its strong transportation research and educational programs. In addition to its state-of-the-art simulation and testing facilities, the UW also benefits from a strategic location in the region and from strong affiliations with local transportation agencies and the federal UTC program. Likewise, the consortium universities offer complementary assets and expertise, providing opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration, graduate student exchange programs, and the dissemination of data-driven solutions among the partner states. The PacTrans consortium member universities, which have taken part in the UTC program since its inception, have established reputations for leadership in transportation research and education. Collectively, they offer outstanding faculties, students, and facilities to support the research and educational goals of PacTrans.

Across all of its work, PacTrans will benefit from collaborations with a wide range of private and public stakeholders, including the state departments of transportation (DOTs) in Washington, Idaho, Alaska and Oregon. The strong support of the state DOTs in all four states is evident in the substantial funding they invest annually in the transportation research conducted by the five partner institutions. Historically, UTC funding has been a core element for the success of transportation research in this region and the new Region 10 UTC will continue this strong tradition.

We wholeheartedly support this collaboration to be designated as the Regional UTC for USDOT Region 10. We request that you give it every consideration.

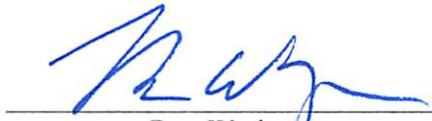
Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



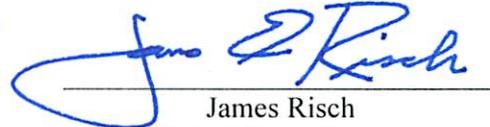
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeff Merkley
United States Senator



Mike Crapo
United States Senator



James Risch
United States Senator



Mark Begich
United States Senator



Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Kurt Schrader
Member of Congress

Cc: Administrator Gregory D. Winfree, Research and Innovative Technology Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation