July 11, 2019

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

SUBJECT: FY 2019 BUILD Program – Support Port of Los Angeles BUILD Application
State Route 47-Vincent Thomas Bridge and Harbor Boulevard-Front Street interchange
Improvement Project

Dear Secretary Chao,

On behalf of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, the largest and most influential business organization in Los Angeles County for over 130 years, I am writing in strong support of the State Route 47-Vincent Thomas Bridge (VTB) and Harbor Boulevard-Front Street Interchange project application submitted by the Port of Los Angeles. The application requests $20.8 million for the improvement project, which is being developed in collaboration with Caltrans. It is also a United States Department of Transportation designated Primary Highway Freight Network-Primary Highway Freight System (PHFS) Route. The project will significantly reduce delay, potential for accident/non-recurrent congestion, and emissions. It is a crucial transportation project serving both the Port of Los Angeles (POLA) and Port of Long Beach (POLB), which comprise the San Pedro Bay Port Complex – the largest Port Complex in the western hemisphere.

This project entails relocation of the existing westbound off-ramp from south to north of the VTB. This element eliminates a very unsafe weave on the existing off-ramp from SR 47/I-110 (another PHFS route), which has a very high truck proportion and causes significant delay, upstream ramp queues onto I-110 and SR 47, and accident potential. It also significantly improves arterial street traffic operating conditions on Harbor Boulevard, another PHFS. The project also includes realignment of the eastbound on-ramp to the VTB, to provide slow-moving trucks that are on a steep 6% grade merge more safely onto one of California’s signature suspension bridges. The total cost of the project is $48.7 million.

In 2018, the POLA and POLB handled a combine 17.5 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), 2.5 times more than the next largest port in the United States. By 2035, the San Pedro Bay Port Complex is projected to handle approximately 35 million TEUs. This particular interchange directly serves three container terminals, and about 5 percent of all waterborne containers entering and exiting the enter United States. The I-110, SR 47, and adjacent I-710 carry approximately 25% of all U.S. waterborne container volume.

The improvement project will significantly improve safety for drivers, reduce traffic delays, and emissions with in a low-income community qualified opportunity zone. It is a vital part of our nation’s infrastructure. For these reasons, we respectfully request USDOT approves this BUILD

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grant application, we appreciate your consideration and leadership. Please contact Public Policy Manager, Kendal Asuncion, with any questions at kasuncan@lachamber.com or 213-580-7518.

Sincerely,

Maria S. Salinas
President & CEO