



# APPENDIX B

## LETTERS OF SUPPORT





# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0905

BILL NELSON  
FLORIDA

October 17, 2011

The Honorable Ray LaHood  
Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, Southeast  
Washington, District of Columbia 20590

**RE: Hurlburt Field Overpass Tiger III**

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am pleased to provide this letter in support of the Florida Department of Transportation's efforts to obtain a federal grant. The goal of their proposed project is to construct an overpass on US 98 in Okaloosa County at the entrance to Hurlburt Field. I respectfully request your consideration of this organization's application for federal funding.

US 98 is the economic backbone of the Florida panhandle coastal region and is recognized as the leading technology center of northwest Florida. It connects the deepwater Ports of Pensacola and Panama City which are both designated foreign trade zones. Furthermore, it connects the Eglin Air Force Base and Pensacola NAS. If funded, this interchange would increase capacity and improve access to Hurlburt Field, improve the operation of the intersection, and enhance safety while improving response time for personnel living off base.

Again, I encourage your consideration of this worthy cause. If I can be of further assistance in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address below.

Sincerely,

BN/ut

CC: Ms. Lynn Bannister, Regional Director, U. S. Senator Bill Nelson

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 21, 2011

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

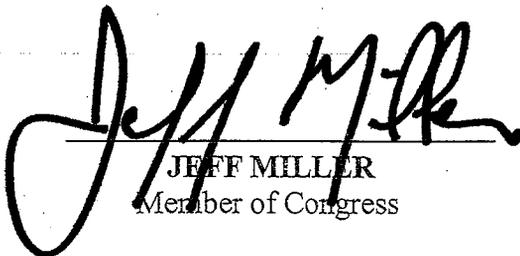
Dear Secretary LaHood:

We are writing in regards to the recent application submitted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) under the Department of Transportation's TIGER Discretionary Grant Program to build a proposed flyover on U.S. 98 at the entrance of Hurlburt Field. It is our sincere hope that the Department will give every possible consideration to FDOT's efforts to improve the infrastructure in Northwest Florida through their partnership with the United States Department of Defense and Okaloosa County, Florida.

Northwest Florida is home to one of the world's largest Air Force bases and some of the world's most pristine white-sand beaches, attracting thousands of visitors annually. Northwest Florida continues to be an essential area of support for our nation's defense, and its major commands include the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group, the Air Armament Center, the Air Force Special Operations Command, and the 33<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Wing, home of all initial Joint Strike Fighter training. There is an essential need for additional infrastructure to support the current military, civilian, and tourist populations and the thousands of people who will now reside in Northwest Florida as a result of the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) process. U.S. 98 serves as a major connector, and the interchange would not only improve access to Hurlburt Field, but would also enhance safety in the entire region.

As the Department considers funding under the TIGER Program, we would appreciate your full and fair consideration of FDOT's transportation priority. Please do not hesitate to contact Diane Cihota in Rep. Jeff Miller's office at 202.225.4136 or [diane.cihota@mail.house.gov](mailto:diane.cihota@mail.house.gov) or Kristen Callaway in Rep. Southerland's office at (202) 225-5235 or [kristen.callaway@mail.house.gov](mailto:kristen.callaway@mail.house.gov) if we can answer any questions or provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

  
JEFF MILLER  
Member of Congress

  
STEVE SOUTHERLAND, II  
Member of Congress

JM/dc : SS/kc

cc: Ralph Yoder, FDOT District Three Intergovernmental Liaison



## THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

### COMMITTEES:

Criminal Justice, *Chair*  
Transportation, *Vice Chair*  
Budget - Subcommittee on Criminal and Civil Justice  
Appropriations  
Budget - Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism,  
and Economic Development Appropriations  
Communications, Energy, and Public Utilities  
Reapportionment  
Rules - Subcommittee on Ethics and Elections

### SELECT COMMITTEE:

Protecting Florida's Children

### SENATOR GREG EVERS

2nd District

October 13, 2011

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood, Secretary  
U. S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, Southeast  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary,

It is my distinct honor and pleasure to submit this letter of support for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant application submitted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to construct an interchange and elevated roadway on U.S. 98 at the entrance to Hurlburt Field AFB in Okaloosa County. This project is of great importance to the local community and traveling public, as well as our area military partners. Once constructed the interchange will increase capacity and improve access to Hurlburt Field, improve the operation of the intersection, enhance safety and improve response time for personnel living off base.

This project is a partnership with the United States Department of Defense, US Air force, the State of Florida and Okaloosa County. The State of Florida, through the Defense Infrastructure Grant program, has funded the development of an environmental document and "Bid" ready Design - Build Request for Proposals (RFP) document for the construction of a critical intersection improvement that will allow US 98 traffic to overpass this intersection and entrance to Hurlburt field.

US 98 is the economic backbone of the Florida panhandle coastal region. It connects the deepwater Ports of Pensacola and Panama City, which are both designated foreign trade zones. It also connects the world's largest Air Force Base – Eglin AFB with Tyndall AFB and Pensacola NAS. Most importantly to this project, Hurlburt Field is the home of the Special Operations Command. The increase of the mission to these bases, in part due to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) has and will continue to significantly impact the military, civilian and business traffic along this corridor and this intersection in particular.

Improvements to the congestion and traffic delays will enhance this area's consideration with regards to future mission assignments. The reduced commute time would also be a major plus for

#### REPLY TO:

- 598 North Ferdon Boulevard, Crestview, Florida 32536 (850) 689-0556
- 5224 Willing Street, Milton, Florida 32570 (850) 983-5550
- 24 North Tarragona, Pensacola, Florida 32502 (850) 595-0213
- 308 Senate Office Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5000

Senate's Website: [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)

**MIKE HARIDOPOLOS**  
President of the Senate

**MICHAEL S. "MIKE" BENNETT**  
President Pro Tempore

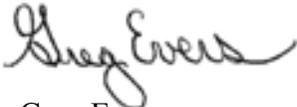
October 13, 2011

Page 2

the military personnel that need to deploy on short notice. Additionally, the improvements could expand the available options of residential communities.

The application of this grant by the Florida Department of Transportation has my full support. I Thank you for your favorable consideration of this project, and please do not hesitate to call on me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Greg Evers". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Greg Evers

# THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

## COMMITTEES:

Budget - Subcommittee on Transportation, Tourism,  
and Economic Development Appropriations, *Chair*  
Reapportionment, *Chair*  
Budget  
Budget - Subcommittee on Health and Human Services  
Appropriations  
Commerce and Tourism  
Health Regulation  
Rules  
Rules - Subcommittee on Ethics and Elections

## JOINT COMMITTEE:

Legislative Budget Commission

## SENATOR DON GAETZ

4th District

October 18, 2011

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, Southeast  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood,

It is a great privilege for me to write in strong support of the Florida Department of Transportation's application for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Discretionary Grant through the U.S. Department of Transportation. These funds would provide assistance for the construction of a Single Point Urban Interchange at the entrance of Hurlburt Field, the headquarters of the Air Force Special Operations Command and the First Special Operations Wing and elevating a major highway, U.S. Highway 98, which runs through Florida's coastal region.

As an instrumental transportation route for Northwest Florida, U.S. Highway 98 benefits military personnel, local businesses, residents and traveling-visitors. With the addition of this proposed roadway interchange, this project will create a unique opportunity for Panhandle communities by creating jobs and assisting with economic recovery since the devastating effects that took place due to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. Since April 2010, the oil spill has continued to harm Northwest Florida's economy in vital economic areas including tourism and economic development. However, with this newly proposed project, it will provide an outlet for job creation and growth to our area.

In addition to providing an important passage for the thousands of residents and visitors each year, U.S. Highway 98 also connects two designated economic trade zones within our area: Ports of Pensacola and Panama City. This federal highway provides accessibility to the world's largest Air Force Base, Eglin, with Tyndall Air Force Base and Pensacola Naval Air Station. With the construction of the proposed overpass, it will increase the mission of these bases, in part due to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission and will continue to significantly impact the military, civilian and commercial traffic along the corridor and particularly this intersection.

## REPLY TO:

- ☐ 4300 Legendary Drive, Suite 230, Destin, Florida 32541 (850) 897-5747
- ☐ 420 Senate Office Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5009

Senate's Website: [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov)

MIKE HARIDOPOLOS  
President of the Senate

MICHAEL S. "MIKE" BENNETT  
President Pro Tempore

October 18, 2011

Page 2

Secretary LaHood, the construction of the proposed overpass at this intersection will have a significant impact on Northwest Florida. It will assist us in regaining our economic footing and improve the military's efficiency and accessibility to one of the Nation's largest Air Force installations. Please give the Florida Department of Transportation's application favorable consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Don Gaetz", is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Senator Don Gaetz



Florida House of Representatives  
Representative Doug Broxson  
District 1

Finance & Tax Committee  
Transportation & Economic Development Appropriations  
Subcommittee

Insurance & Banking Subcommittee  
Government Operations Subcommittee  
Transportation & Highway Safety Subcommittee

Secretary LaHood,

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Florida Department of Transportation for the application for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Discretionary Grant (TIGER). The project will construct an interchange and elevated roadway at the entrance to Hurlburt Field (the Headquarters of the Air Force Special Operations Command and the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Operations Wing). The interchange will increase capacity and improve access to Hurlburt Field, improve the operation of the intersection, enhance safety and improve response time for personnel living off base.

US 98 is the economic backbone of the Florida panhandle coastal region. It connects the deepwater Ports of Pensacola and Panama City, which are both designated foreign trade zones. It also connects the world's largest Air Force Base – Eglin AFB with Tyndall AFB and Pensacola NAS. Most importantly to this project, Hurlburt Field is the home of the Special Operations Command. The increase of the mission to these bases, in part due to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) has and will continue to significantly impact the military, civilian and business traffic along this corridor and this intersection in particular.

This project is a partnership with the United States Department of Defense, US Air force, the State of Florida and Okaloosa County. The State of Florida, through the Defense Infrastructure Grant program, has funded the development of an environmental document and "Bid" ready Design - Build Request for Proposals (RFP) document for the construction of a critical intersection improvement that will allow US 98 traffic to overpass this intersection and entrance to Hurlburt field.

The application of this grant by the Florida Department of Transportation has my full support. Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to call on me if you have questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Broxson", written over a horizontal line.

Doug Broxson  
State Representative

**District Offices:**

Pensacola State College, Building 4000, RM 4013, 5988 HWY 90, Milton FL 32583-1713  
2990-C Gulf Breeze Parkway, Gulf Breeze FL 32563-3100  
**Capitol Office:** 1003 The Capitol, 402 S Monroe St., Tallahassee FL 32399-1300

Phone: 850-626-3113  
Phone: 850-916-5436  
Phone: 850-488-8188

Fax: 850-626-3114  
Fax: 850-916-5438



# Florida House of Representatives

## Representative Matt Gaetz

### District 4

**District Office:**  
1188 Eglin Parkway  
Shalimar, FL 32579  
(850) 833-9328  
(850) 833-9342 (fax)

**Tallahassee Office:**  
1003 The Capitol  
402 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
(850) 488-1170

Email: [Matt.Gaetz@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:Matt.Gaetz@myfloridahouse.gov)

October 28, 2011

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

Dear Mr. LaHood,

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Florida Department of Transportation for the application for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Discretionary Grant (TIGER). The project will construct an interchange and elevated roadway at the entrance to Hurlburt Field (the Headquarters of the Air Force Special Operations Command and the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Operations Wing). The interchange will increase capacity and improve access to Hurlburt Field, improve the operation of the intersection, enhance safety and improve response time for personnel living off base.

US 98 is the economic backbone of the Florida panhandle coastal region. It connects the deepwater ports of Pensacola and Panama City, which are both designated foreign trade zones. It also connects the world's largest Air Force Base – Eglin AFB with Tyndall AFB and Pensacola NAS. Most importantly to this project, Hurlburt Field is the home of the Special Operations Command. The increase of the mission to these bases, in part due to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) has and will continue to significantly impact the military, civilian and business traffic along this corridor and this intersection in particular.

**Committees:**  
**K-20 Innovation, Vice Chair**  
**PreK-12 Appropriations**  
**Judiciary**  
**Civil Justice**  
**Rulemaking & Regulation**  
**Joint Administrative Procedures**  
**Florida Defense Support Task Force**

The improvements to the congestion and traffic delays will enhance this area's consideration with regards to future mission assignments. The reduced commute time would also be a major plus for the military personnel that need to deploy on short notice. Additionally, the improvements could expand the available options of residential communities.

This project is a partnership with the United States Department of Defense, US Air Force, the State of Florida, and Okaloosa County. The State of Florida, through the Defense Infrastructure Grant program, has funded the development of an environmental document and "Bid" ready Design – Build Request for Proposals (RFP) document for the construction of a critical intersection improvement that will allow US 98 traffic to overpass this intersection and entrance to Hurlburt Field.

The application of this grant by the Florida Department of Transportation has my full support. Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to call on me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Gaetz".

Matt Gaetz  
District 4

*Beaux Tige Grants!*



# Florida House of Representatives

## *Representative Brad Drake*

### District 5

**District Office:**

NWFSC - Chautauqua Campus #205  
908 Hwy. 90 W  
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433  
(850) 892-8431  
(850) 892-8433 (fax)

**Tallahassee Office:**

218 House Office Building  
402 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
(850) 488-4726

[brad.drake@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:brad.drake@myfloridahouse.gov)

October 25, 2011

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, Southeast  
Washington, DC 20590

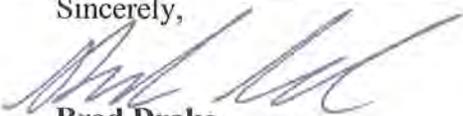
Dear Secretary LaHood,

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is applying for a TIGER Discretionary Grant to build a proposed flyover on U.S. 98 at the entrance of Hurlburt Field. FDOT has partnered with the United States Department of Defense, U.S. Air Force, and Okaloosa County to help move this project to completion.

The proposed interchange would increase traffic capacity and improve access to Hurlburt Field, improve the operation of the intersection, enhance safety and improve response time for personnel living off base. The proposed improvements to the congestion and traffic delays will enhance this area's consideration with regards to future mission assignments.

I recognize the importance of this project to our military partners; as well as, the local community and traveling public and am pleased to offer my support for this project.

Sincerely,

  
**Brad Drake**

Representative - 5

**Committees:**

Transportation and Highway Safety Subcommittee, Chair  
Select Committee on Water Policy, Vice Chair  
Economic Affairs Committee  
House Redistricting Subcommittee  
Rulemaking and Regulations Subcommittee  
Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee



Florida House of Representatives  
Representative Marti Coley  
District 7

Reply to:

- 3094 Indian Circle  
Room 186  
Marianna, Florida 32446  
(850) 718-0047 Fax (850) 718-0062
- 319 Capitol  
402 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300  
(850) 488-2873 Fax (850) 922-7755

\*Chair, PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee

\*Appropriations Committee

\*Education Committee

\*K-20 Competitiveness Subcommittee

Marti.Coley@myfloridahouse.gov

October 7, 2011

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, Southeast  
Washington, DC 20590

Secretary Raymond LaHood:

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Florida Department of Transportation for the application for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Discretionary Grant (TIGER). The project will construct an interchange and elevated roadway at the entrance to Hurlburt Field (the Headquarters of the Air Force Special Operations Command and the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Operations Wing).

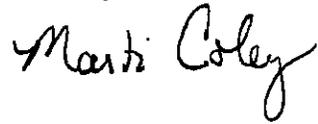
US 98 is the economic backbone of the Florida panhandle coastal region. It connects the deepwater Ports of Pensacola and Panama City, which are both designated foreign trade zones. It also connects the world's largest Air Force Base – Eglin AFB with Tyndall AFB and Pensacola NAS. Most importantly to this project, Hurlburt Field is the home of the Special Operations Command. The increase of the mission to these bases, in part due to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC), has and will continue to significantly impact the military, civilian and business traffic along this corridor and this intersection in particular.

This project is a partnership with the United States Department of Defense, US Air force, the State of Florida and Okaloosa County. The State of Florida, through the Defense Infrastructure Grant program, has funded the development of an environmental document and "Bid" ready Design - Build Request for

Proposals (RFP) document for the construction of a critical intersection improvement that will allow US 98 traffic to overpass this intersection and entrance to Hurlburt field.

The application of this grant by the Florida Department of Transportation has my full support. Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to call on me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marti Coley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marti Coley



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
1ST SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING (AFSOC)  
HURLBURT FIELD FLORIDA

OCT 25 2011

Colonel James C. Slife  
212 Lukasik Avenue  
Suite 315  
Hurlburt Field FL 32544

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

Dear Secretary LaHood

I am extremely pleased that the Florida Department of Transportation is submitting the Hurlburt Field Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) project for TIGER grant funding. The 1st Special Operations Wing wholeheartedly supports the proposed Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) project at the Hurlburt Field main gate (Cody Avenue) and U.S. Highway 98. The proposal would construct an elevated section of Highway 98 with slip ramps at Cody Avenue.

Hurlburt Field is not only home to the 1st Special Operations Wing, but also supports Headquarters Air Force Special Operations Command and dozens of tenant units. Over 7,500 military and 4,500 civilian employees live and work on Hurlburt and the majority of them travel on Highway 98 every day. However, on a daily basis, despite the amount of traffic that enters Hurlburt Field, even more continues on to Fort Walton Beach, Eglin AFB and the Destin area. In addition to preventing major traffic accidents at this intersection, this SPUI project will allow free flow of through-traffic and minimize the impact our security procedures and entry queues have on our Okaloosa County neighbors.

In the past ten years, we have made numerous improvements and capital investments to improving our traffic management and flow through Hurlburt's front gate. We have also continuously engaged with the local communities and Transportation Planning Offices to ensure that other local government agencies have kept this SPUI project visible and as ready as possible for construction funding. The project is currently in the Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization's 2035 Needs Plan and the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan.

Thank you for your strong consideration of this project for the TIGER discretionary grants. We are looking forward to working with the professional team of transportation experts in our area to improve the infrastructure and quality of life for travelers along the Gulf Coast.

Sincerely

  
JAMES C. SLIFE, Colonel, USAF  
Commander

*Any Time...Any Place*



**Economic Development Council**  
*of Okaloosa County, Florida*

October 10, 2011

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

Dear Secretary LaHood:

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Florida Department of Transportation's *Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Discretionary Grant* (TIGER) application.

The **Economic Development Council for Okaloosa County, Florida** works to ensure that Okaloosa County and its business community remain the leader of Northwest Florida industry, and continues to be recognized as one of *America's Top-10 Best Places to Live!*

Okaloosa County, along with its neighboring Santa Rosa and Walton Counties, is home to the largest Air Force Base in the *world* - Eglin Air Force Base. The land reservation provided by Eglin AFB encompasses three military installations; Eglin AFB, Hurlburt Field, and Duke Field. Most importantly to this project, the area under consideration represents Hurlburt Field's primary access point to the public roadway system, an area that during peak hours sees traffic back-ups for over two miles along US 98.

The TIGER project will construct an interchange and elevated roadway on Highway 98 at the entrance to Hurlburt Field. The interchange will increase capacity and improve access to Hurlburt Field, improve operation of the current inferior intersection, enhance safety and improve commuter response time for personnel living off base as well as non-military related persons traveling Highway 98.

Additionally, SR 30/US 98 is the economic backbone of the Florida panhandle coastal region. It connects the deepwater Ports of Pensacola and Panama City, which are both designated foreign trade zones. It also connects Eglin AFB with Pensacola NAS and Tyndall AFB respectively. US 98 experiences an annual average daily traffic count of over 37,000 vehicles. Studies have shown that during the peak hours approximately 40% of the traffic is destined for Hurlburt Field. The increase of the missions to these bases and the surrounding industrial growth has and will continue to significantly impact the military, civilian and business traffic along this corridor and this intersection in particular.

The proposed improvements to this interchange will enhance this area's consideration with regards to future military mission assignments. Additionally, the improvements will expand the available options of residential communities, business attraction, and tourism drive-to destinations.

The application for this grant by the Florida Department of Transportation has my full support. We applaud the effort to fund this project to help relieve the constant congestion along US 98. Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to call on me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

  
Lawrence Sassano  
President

P.O. Box 4097, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549

(850) 362-6467 (800) 995-7374 toll-free [www.florida-edc.org](http://www.florida-edc.org)

**Okaloosa-Walton  
Transportation Planning  
Organization**

# OWTPO

James T. Wood, Jr.  
Chairman

Wayne Graham  
Vice Chairman

P.O. Box 11399 • 32524-1399 Pensacola, FL • Street Address: 4081 E. Olive Road-Suite A • 32514  
P: 850.332.7976 • 1.800.226.8914 • F: 850.637.1923 • www.wfrpc.org

October 31, 2011

Honorable Ray LaHood  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 30590

Re: Tiger III Grant Support for  
US98/Hurlburt Field Interchange

Dear Secretary LaHood:

The Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization respectfully requests your support and award of a Tiger III Grant for construction of a single point interchange. The focus of this project is at the intersection of US 98 at Cody Avenue, at the main gate to Hurlburt Field on Eglin Air Force Base in Okaloosa County.

Currently, the intersection is a four-lane at-grade urban arterial. There have been 100 crashes reported from one mile to the east and west of the main gate between 2004 and 2009. Sixty percent of those crashes related to this entrance to Hurlburt Field. Construction of this project would significantly benefit the area by improving the existing operational Level of Service and reducing vehicle delay and emissions.

The project would construct two, two-lane bridges. The bridges would provide two 12-foot travel lanes in each direction along US98 with ramps to and from Cody Avenue. The design allows for future widening to three lanes.

Construction would require approximately 4.9 acres of federally-owned property at Hurlburt Field. No relocations would be required. Because the area is closed to all forms of public access and does not function as a park, recreation land, wildlife refuge, or historical site, the project would not have public access impacts. Additionally, review of predicted noise levels indicate the proposed project will not cause substantial noise level increases. Therefore, no noise mitigation is proposed.



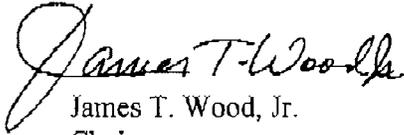
Staff to TPO

"...planning for the future transportation needs of the Okaloosa-Walton Urbanized Area..."

Page 2

The application for this grant by the Florida Department of Transportation has the Okaloosa-Walton TPO's full support. Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to call on me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



James T. Wood, Jr.  
Chairman



Staff to TPO

"...planning for the future transportation needs of the Okaloosa-Walton Urbanized Area..."



**THE DEFENSE SUPPORT INITIATIVE**  
Okaloosa—Santa Rosa—Walton Counties

October 10, 2011

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

Dear Secretary LaHood:

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Florida Department of Transportation's *Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Discretionary Grant (TIGER)* application.

The tri-county Defense Support Initiative (DSI) is a committee sponsored by the Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County. The EDC DSI is recognized by the State of Florida as the official representative and the lead agency for the Eglin complex's base/community initiatives. Originated in 1991, the DSI has led the county's efforts to ensure our military installations remain strong and viable contributors to the national defense and the economies of Okaloosa and surrounding counties.

Okaloosa County, along with its neighboring Santa Rosa and Walton Counties, is home to the largest Air Force Base in the *world* - Eglin Air Force Base. The land reservation provided by Eglin AFB encompasses three military installations; Eglin AFB, Hurlburt Field, and Duke Field. Most importantly to this project, the area under consideration represents Hurlburt Field's primary access point to the public roadway system, an area that during peak hours sees traffic back-ups for over two miles along US 98.

The TIGER project will construct an interchange and elevated roadway on Highway 98 at the entrance to Hurlburt Field. The interchange will increase capacity and improve access to Hurlburt Field, improve operation of the current inferior intersection, enhance safety and improve commuter response time for personnel living off base as well as non-military related persons traveling Highway 98.

Additionally, SR 30/US 98 is the economic backbone of the Florida panhandle coastal region. It connects Eglin AFB with Pensacola NAS and Tyndall AFB respectively. The increase of the missions to these bases and the surrounding industrial growth has and will continue to significantly impact the military, civilian and business traffic along this corridor and this intersection in particular.

The proposed improvements to this interchange will enhance this area's consideration with regards to future military mission assignments. Additionally, the improvements will greatly improve safety and expand the options for residential communities, business attractions, and tourism drive-to destinations.

The application for this grant by the Florida Department of Transportation has the full support of the DSI. Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to call on me if you have questions.

Respectfully,

  
Samuel B. Burkett III  
2011 DSI Chairman  
Vice President Jacobs Technology

October 4, 2011

Honorable Ray LaHood  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590



RE: US 98/SR 30 and Cody Avenue, Okaloosa County  
Single Point Urban Interchange at the Entrance to Hurlburt Field

Dear Secretary LaHood:

Florida's Great Northwest is the regional economic development organization representing the 16-county Northwest Florida region, which includes Okaloosa County. Because Florida's Great Northwest recognizes the collective advantages, benefits, regional and national strengths the US 98/SR 30 and Cody Avenue Interchange project in Okaloosa County will provide, we respectfully ask for your support and award of a Tiger III Discretionary Grant to District Three, Florida Department of Transportation.

In addition to being a tourist destination, Okaloosa County is home to three military installations--Eglin Air Force Base, Hurlburt Field and Duke Field—which together make Eglin Air Force Base one of the largest military bases in the United States. In addition, Hurlburt Field houses the Air Force's 1<sup>st</sup> Special Operations Wing, and it is critical to our nation and region to provide safe transportation for the base and our communities during emergency situations and evacuations, including hurricane evacuations. The military is the top contributor to the Okaloosa County economy followed by tourism, and US 98 is critically important to both sectors.

The US 98/SR 30 interchange project would address one of the most critical congestion locations along US 98 in Okaloosa County. The project, if funded and constructed, would eliminate left turn conflicts (and the accompanying crash dangers) from US 98 into Hurlburt Field at the main gate. The project would increase through traffic capacity by eliminating the left turn conflicts, thereby extending the capacity of the roadway far into the future. The successful award of this project transforms a congested, unsafe intersection into one that is safe and provides free flow of traffic on the *only* east-west arterial connection in south Okaloosa County.

If awarded, the US 98/SR 30 interchange project will significantly benefit Okaloosa County, Northwest Florida, and our nation. This project will create the capacity to move additional travelers, help support a vibrant and sustainable economy, create regional, national, and global competitive advantages for the development of industry, increased income and prosperity, while ensuring healthy communities with the quality of life that preserves the natural beauty and resources of our region. This project meets or exceeds the criteria for a successful award. Your consideration and support of the US 98/SR 30 interchange project is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Don Kirkman  
President

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## Board of County Commissioners

State of Florida

October 18, 2011

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

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of the Florida Department of Transportation for the application for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Discretionary Grant (TIGER). The project will construct an interchange and elevated roadway at the entrance to Hurlburt Field (the Headquarters of the Air Force Special Operations Command and the 1<sup>st</sup> Special Operations Wing). The interchange will increase capacity and improve access to Hurlburt Field, improve the operation of the intersection, enhance safety and improve response time for personnel living off base.

US 98 is the economic backbone of the Florida panhandle coastal region. It connects the deepwater Ports of Pensacola and Panama City, which are both designated foreign trade zones. It also connects the world's largest Air Force Base – Eglin AFB with Tyndall AFB and Pensacola NAS. Most importantly to this project, Hurlburt Field is the home of the Special Operations Command. The increase of the mission to these bases, in part due to the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) has and will continue to significantly impact the military, civilian and business traffic along this corridor and this intersection in particular.

The improvements to the congestion and traffic delays will enhance this area's consideration with regards to future mission assignments. The reduced commute time would also be a major plus for the military personnel that need to deploy on short notice. Additionally, the improvements could expand the available options of residential communities.

This project is a partnership with the United States Department of Defense, US Air force, the State of Florida and Okaloosa County. The State of Florida, through the Defense Infrastructure Grant program, has funded the development of an environmental document and "Bid" ready Design - Build Request for Proposals (RFP) document for the construction of a critical intersection improvement that will allow US 98 traffic to overpass this intersection and entrance to Hurlburt field.

The application of this grant by the Florida Department of Transportation has my full support. Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to call on me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

  
James Campbell  
Chairman, Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners

# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OKALOOSA COUNTY

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
ALEXIS TIBBETTS, Ed.D.

ATTORNEY TO THE BOARD  
C. JEFFREY McINNIS, Esq.



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October 16, 2011

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

Dear Secretary,

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is applying for a Federal Grant through U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) to build a flyover/ overpass on US 98 at the entrance of Hurlburt Field. On behalf of the Okaloosa County School District I am writing to express our full support for this proposed project.

For many years the traffic on Highway 98 has been extremely congested during the morning and afternoon hours and this intersection has been a major contributor to this problem. The School District Transportation Department (our buses), students who drive to and from school, parents transporting students, as well as, commuters would benefit greatly from a flyover at this location.

The School District has worked cooperatively for many years with the local FDOT to assist in efforts to alleviate congestion on this section of Highway 98. Our efforts have included scheduling drop-off and pick-up times for bus routes that have the least impact on the current congestion problems during the morning and afternoon hours. In an effort to minimize the number of pick-ups and drop-offs on Highway 98 the School District has purchased smaller school buses that can maneuver within smaller cul-de-sacs off Highway 98.

History will show that a wreck on Highway 98 at this intersection in the morning hours has caused students to miss instructional time.

Not only would there be time saved in our students' school days and commuters' workdays, there would be a savings in dollars spent for fuel and the increased maintenance that a vehicle needs when driven routinely in heavy traffic. Above all Public Safety would definitely benefit from this flyover project.

The School District would support the FDOT as they apply for a federal grant through the USDOT, Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant program to construct this flyover that would benefit our community in many ways.

Sincerely,

Alexis Tibbetts, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools