



April 26, 2016

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

Dear Secretary Foxx:

Work Train is pleased to support the Port of Oswego's application to the 2016 TIGER grant program for a transformative inland port project. This project will have a substantial long-term impact on our region's economy and will create job opportunities where they're needed most, within Syracuse, where poverty and joblessness are pervasive.

Work Train (WT) is a unique workforce initiative, driven by a collaborative of leaders from the private sector, economic development, philanthropy, the workforce investment board, local government, training and education, and grassroots organizations. WT was spearheaded and is managed by CenterState CEO. Funded by the United Way of CNY, Allyn Foundation, Community Foundation, Reisman Foundation, and Gifford Foundation, Work Train seeks to establish a community-wide workforce platform, using a "Dual Client Model," where both low-income residents and employers are supported. Work Train is designated as a partner within the National Fund for Workforce Solutions.

In 2015 Work Train launched workforce platforms serving regional employers in the manufacturing and health care industries. Since then, Work Train-sponsored programs have placed over 150 low-income residents into positions within those industries. Work Train operates as an adaptable framework that can be applied to different industries, across different worker skill levels. CenterState CEO and Work Train staff will work with the Port of Oswego to develop a Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (TDL) platform that will identify the Inland Port's workforce needs and translate them into a program designed to attract, train, and develop workers from disadvantaged Syracuse neighborhoods. Since the Work Train model is predicated upon providing career pathways for underserved populations, this collaboration will ensure that entry-level CenterState NY Inland Port workers participating in the TDL Work Train platform are provided with the supports, education, and training necessary to move up within the TDL industry. TDL is among the fastest growing industry partnerships within the National Fund for Workforce Solutions network, which means that Work Train will be able to access several different best practices from our peers, allowing for a more effective implementation strategy.

We look forward to working with Port of Oswego and other regional partners to develop and implement this strategy.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dominic Robinson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Dominic Robinson
Director of Work Train

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret O'Connell". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first name being more prominent.

Margaret O'Connell
Chair of the Work Train Collaborative