



## MADISON COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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October 17, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, D.C. 20003-3660

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

We would like to pledge our support for City of Ridgeland's application for funding assistance through the FY2022 Reconnect Communities Pilot Program grants for the Highland Commerce Connector.

The Highland Commerce Connector will connect and complement three major federally authorized roadway projects recently completed, including the Lake Harbour Drive Extension, the West County Line Corridor Improvements, and the Interstate 220 (I-220) Bridge Widening. The initiative also offers a unique opportunity to remediate adverse impacts and restore connectivity to Tougaloo College, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) that was founded in 1869. Tougaloo was bisected and divided 38 years ago when the construction of Interstate 220 severed the only remaining pathway through this community and separated a significant portion of the College's property from its main campus.

In addition to these immediate impacts, the Highland Commerce Connector will contribute significantly to further addressing the area's multiple priority transportation needs by reducing local traffic on Interstate-55 and Interstate-220, and by advancing vital regional economic development initiatives, as acknowledged by multiple local, regional, and state entities. The Mississippi Legislature demonstrated their support and partnership by providing partial funding for preconstruction activities this past year.

I hope you will give the City of Ridgeland's Highland Commerce Connector application every consideration. Please do not hesitate to request additional information, if needed.

Sincerely yours,

Paul Griffin  
District 5 Supervisor