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**Belinda Prinz, (216) 522-4900, [Belinda.Prinz@mail.house.gov](mailto:Belinda.Prinz@mail.house.gov)**

**Rob Nichols, (330) 760-7582, [Rob.Nichols@governor.ohio.gov](mailto:Rob.Nichols@governor.ohio.gov)**

**CONGRESSWOMAN FUDGE, GOVERNOR KASICH REQUEST PILOT PROGRAM  
TO INCREASE MINORITY BUSINESS PARTICIPATION IN FEDERALLY FUNDED  
TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS IN CLEVELAND**

Washington, D.C. – Congresswoman Marcia L. Fudge (OH-11) and Ohio Governor John R. Kasich have sent letters to U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx urging the U.S. Department of Transportation’s (USDOT) to grant the State of Ohio a waiver to the Department’s Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program for upcoming projects in the City of Cleveland.

Gov. Kasich is requesting the USDOT waiver to enable the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to implement a pilot project that would increase minority business participation in projects to reflect the City of Cleveland’s demographics.

Congresswoman Fudge indicated her strong support for the state’s request, noting in her letter that recent federally funded transportation projects have not resulted in contracts reaching all disadvantaged groups and city residents equitably.

The letter states, “According to recent Census data, the population of the City of Cleveland is 53.3% African-American, 33.4% non-minority, 10% Hispanic, 1.8% Asian, and 0.3% American Indian. To offer an example of a recent DBE participation breakdown on a project in Cleveland, the Innerbelt Bridge phase one reflects a breakdown in participation by DBE-qualified firms as follows: 6% African-American, 56% non-minority women, 3% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 29% Native American. It’s clear these figures reveal socio-economic inequity.”

Gov. Kasich’s letter to Sec. Foxx indicated the urgent need to subdivide DBE goals to achieve diversity in upcoming projects: “ODOT began implementing a program for the second phase of the Cleveland Innerbelt project to increase minority business participation in a meaningful, substantive and representative manner. Some strategies include focused outreach, expanded training opportunities and technical assistance, mentoring programs and reimbursement for some costs associated with becoming prequalified to work on ODOT projects.

“While I believe these strategies will have the effect of improving disadvantaged participation, more urgent steps are required to have an immediate effect on this current project.”

Click [here](#) to see Congresswoman Fudge’s letter.

Click [here](#) to see Governor Kasich’s letter.

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