

Testimony to the Pennsylvania Senate Transportation Committee  
Public Hearing on Act 89 of 2013  
July 17, 2018  
Monroeville Municipal Building  
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Members of the committee- thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the City this morning. My name is Karina Ricks, and I serve as the director of the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure at the City of Pittsburgh. The Department is a new experiment in the City, barely a year old, with ambitious goals to eliminate fatalities on our roads, enhance mobility options and access to opportunity, and reduce the transportation cost burden for all Pittsburghers. As a new department focusing on how people and goods move, we look holistically at a complicated and dynamic network – not only maintaining and enhancing roads, bridges, and walls; but preparing for and responding to mobility services and technology not yet deployed. The future of transportation is complicated, but bright, with the potential to radically improve safety, efficiency, and equity if responsibly guided and sustainably supported.

While we look to the future, we must not neglect our historic infrastructure and the needs of today. Our roads and bridges, some older than a century, are in critical need of basic investment and preventative maintenance. The dedicated funding streams for foundational critical infrastructure are insufficient locally and non-existent from state or federal sources. The sustainable funding structure created through Act 89 is an important step in stabilizing infrastructure. The added financial capacity across the Commonwealth has made getting projects done easier, and we are appreciative of that and look forward to continuing to advance projects in an accelerated manner. Indeed we recognize our obligation to the region and state as the condition and quality of transportation services and facilities in our City is critical to the economic vibrancy of Western Pennsylvania.

One of the most significant impacts of new funding as a result of act 89 is the DCED Multimodal program. For Pittsburgh and other communities across the state, the program supports transportation modes such as bicycle and pedestrian improvements that increase quality of life. Since the program's inception, projects in the City have received more than \$14 million in DCED grants, helping to close the gap on critical projects and promote a more livable region. Act 89 funding recognizes that investment in transportation IS investment in economic development. Communities across the Commonwealth benefit from this program and I encourage the legislature to expand the opportunity for such impactful and effective investments.

Maintaining and enhancing past investments is our key to the future and broader economic opportunities across the state. Pittsburgh is nationally recognized for advancing the development and deployment of connected and autonomous vehicles. We are leading the way in embracing mobility and a service and our transportation network as both platform and component of a broader "internet of things" generating data to help us stay economically competitive and operationally efficient. Devices such as sensors and cameras, connected through a combination of fiber networks and wireless

frequencies, will allow for the next generation of “vehicle to vehicle” and “vehicle to infrastructure” connections and promote the usage of autonomous vehicles.

There is much work to be done to prepare our City for this future of mobility. The future depends on identifying reliable, sustainable funding to support the next generation of seamless mobility and intelligent transportation systems (ITS). For all of the excitement of the city’s adaptive traffic signal network, and the investments being made through the City, State, and Federally funded ATCMTD grant for “Advanced Technologies and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment”, the majority of the City’s traffic signals run on mechanical timing not much different than they were decades ago. We must invest in the future of work to find and train the next generation of technicians, electricians, engineers, and operators to support this new infrastructure and to fill critical gaps across the field as Baby Boomers retire.

As we witness the testing of autonomous vehicles, and prepare for their eventual operations, cities have a unique opportunity to help shape the design of our networks. In Pittsburgh, we hold to the idea that “if it’s not for all, it’s not for us.” We want to see streets that reflect that core value. With the help of our state partners, we hope to continue to make investments in neighborhood traffic calming, safe non-vehicular transit for all ages and abilities, and new mobility options that are accessible and equitable.

The most important value in transportation today is that of flexibility. Flexibility in procurement strategies that allow us to rapidly experiment, evaluate, and expand new technological deployments. Flexibility that allows longstanding funding streams to evolve and respond to more multimodal demands. Flexibility that allows local jurisdictions the ability to meet their unique challenges with innovative engineering and not just stagnant standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to present today. I’m happy to answer any questions you may have.