



February 20, 2023

The Honorable Mike DeWine
Governor
77 South High Street, 30th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Governor DeWine:

We are writing on behalf of the Ottawa County Improvement Corporation and its Board of Trustees, to ask your office and ODOT reconsider ending the U.S. 23 Connect Study that seeks to improve safe and efficient traffic flow between Northwest, North Central and Columbus, Ohio.

The announcement by ODOT to prematurely end this effort was troubling and the decision not to see the process through in its entirety prevented the full public debate this issue deserves. Toledo is the ONLY metropolitan area in Ohio that must go through not one, but 38 stoplights to reach Columbus. Unfortunately, this problem is only expected to worsen over the next two decades as our state and regions grow in both population, economic opportunity, and truck traffic DOUBLING on the thoroughfare. Not to mention, the route is also used by millions of Central Ohio residents each year who travel to our region for business and pleasure along the Lake Erie shoreline and islands.

It is imperative that ODOT continue to seek a long-term solution -- most likely a by-pass around Delaware -- and address the degradation along the existing U.S. 23 corridor through Delaware County. We understand that a fix will not be easy or inexpensive, but the cost of doing nothing is immeasurable. The residents and business community in our region and Central Ohio deserve better.

For all these reasons and more, the Ottawa County Improvement Corporation supports development of an improved highway connection or bypass connecting our regions, and urges your team and ODOT to continue working with stakeholders to identify an acceptable long-term solution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Justin Moore', written in a cursive style.

J. Justin Moore
President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Christopher J. Singerling', written in a cursive style.

Christopher J. Singerling
Executive Director