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September 9, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
US Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Please accept this letter of support for the Creating a Legacy of Equity + Access to a Network of EVSE Resources in North Carolina (CLEANER NC) application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT's) 2024 Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Community Grant Program. This Project will deliver two new EV charging stations with a total of four Level 2 ports and four Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) ports at Elizabeth City State University (ECSU). This investment will implement convenient, reliable, affordable, and equitable EV charging infrastructure, with a focus on addressing environmental justice in disadvantaged rural communities and mitigating safety risks in alignment with the National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS). CLEANER NC builds upon the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT's) current partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in North Carolina, led by the Office of HBCU Outreach, and will identify solutions to the unique challenges faced by HBCUs when implementing new electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, such as aging infrastructure, limited budgets, and socioeconomic factors. In doing so, CLEANER NC will equitably expand community-based EV charging to accelerate the electrification of North Carolina's transportation system, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and strengthen the partnership between NCDOT and HBCUs to enhance the inclusivity and diversity of North Carolina's clean transportation workforce.

The Project's investments in EV charging stations will be paired with a pilot expansion of the NCDOT Office of HBCU Outreach's Internship Program to support the implementation of North Carolina's Plan for EV Infrastructure Deployment. Up to four interns from ECSU will be placed at state agencies with a clean transportation component for 10 weeks. Additionally, NCDOT's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) will partner with local community-based organizations across the state to perform robust outreach and recruitment into job training programs, with the goal of engaging K-12 students, adults, disadvantaged business enterprises, and others while building trust with communities that have not historically been involved in the clean transportation sector.

Thank you for considering the CLEANER NC grant application for CFI program funding.

Sincerely,

Sparty Hammett, County Manager