



February 18, 2020

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) funding for the US-81 bypass in Grady County, Oklahoma

Honorable Secretary Chao:

On behalf of the Southwest Oklahoma Regional Transportation Planning Organization (SORTPO), a sixteen county regional transportation planning organization in southwest Oklahoma I am writing to voice our Organization's strong support of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) application for an Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant to assist with the construction of the US-81 bypass in Grady County. This project is identified as a future freight corridor project in the 2040 Grady County Long Range Transportation Plan adopted in January 2019. During development of this Plan public comments received during the public involvement process, from Grady County residents and regional stakeholders focused on safety issues concerning the number of trucks on the existing US 81 alignment. Development of the US-81 bypass project is vital to enhancing truck freight connectivity to the region, state and nation. This project supports a network that is critical to Oklahoma's economic and truck freight movement. Improvement of truck freight connectivity in rural Oklahoma will meet the strategic goals of both ODOT and SORTPO's planning program.

The Southwest Oklahoma Regional Transportation Planning Organization recognizes the significance of rural transportation projects that support the expansion and improvement of freight movement and resulting safety and economic benefits arising from such improvements. We strongly urge your support of full funding for the project. Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to call on us should you have questions or if you require additional information.

Sincerely,

Julie Sanders
Director of Transportation, SORTPO
420 Sooner Dr.
Burns Flat, OK 73624