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Pryor, OK 74361

July 9, 2019

Elaine L. Chao, Secretary
Office of Infrastructure Finance and Innovation
Office of the Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

In the late 1930's, the three bridges located across the Pensacola Dam were first constructed. Now almost eighty years later, the Pensacola Dam Bridge is classified by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) as "at-risk" of becoming structurally deficient. The Pensacola Dam Bridge is the narrowest two-lane bridge in Oklahoma, and due to age, narrow width, and excessive loads, these three bridges are now structurally inadequate and functionally obsolete. ODOT safety data shows that the overall collision rates along the project area are 34% above the statewide average rates between 2014 and 2016.

I am writing this letter to express my support for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Grand River Dam Authority's (GRDA) \$15,200,000 request for funding under the current year's BUILD Discretionary Grant Program for State Highway 28 Bridge Widening Project over Pensacola Dam and Auxiliary Spillways. The requested funding will be leveraged with approximately \$14,800,000 state and private investments in order to extend the life of the three bridges through providing enhanced structural capacity while increasing safety for vehicles and pedestrians.

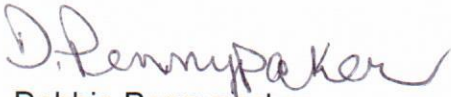
The Pensacola Dam is listed on the National Register of Historic Places due to it being the longest multi-arch dam in the United States. It is also the only multi-arch dam in Oklahoma. The Pensacola Dam Historic District consists of the dam, powerhouse, substation, two spillways and intake structure. Significant rehabilitation and widening is needed so it can continue serving the needs of the Grand River Dam Authority (owner) and Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), as well as the communities of Langley, Disney, and Tia Juana.

The three bridges located along State Highway 28 are traveled daily by a wide variety of fire trucks, ambulances, boats, camping trailers, semi-trucks, recreation vehicles, and other wide loads. **As the 911 Coordinator for Mayes County, I am required to travel this bridge at times to map new addresses in the Disney community. I have to travel on many precarious roads to do my job. Sadly, this is one that I dread traveling on due to the narrowness of the road and the amount of traffic I encounter.** It is also a very important tourism connector route, as it is the primary thoroughfare to multiple marinas, state parks, and resorts located around Grand Lake o' the Cherokees. Moreover, during the summer months, the population surrounding Grand Lake almost triples, placing additional demand on these structures.

Both ODOT and GRDA have shared responsibility for the three bridges and have allocated partial funding to enhance and repair the structures. ODOT and GRDA agree that the project is very important to the future of northeastern Oklahoma in terms of movement of goods and services as well as regional tourism. Likewise, several small and rural communities are at risk if SH 28 is unable to accommodate the size requirements of the average, present day vehicle due to the existing lane width not meeting current industry standards. Stakeholder engagement is ongoing and has included the local communities, county government, emergency responders, and other interested parties. **Recently, I discovered that Disney does not have mail delivery by the United States Postal Service due to the narrowness of the bridges at Pensacola Dam.**

Thank you for the opportunity to support this import project. I believe that ODOT and GRDA's application to widen and rehabilitate SH 28 is a strong candidate for the BUILD Discretionary Grant program, as it is an important project for the public safety and prosperity of northeast Oklahoma.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Debbie Pennypacker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Debbie Pennypacker
911 Director/Coordinator