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07/10/2019

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:

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Grand River Dam Authority (GRDA) are partnering in an application for a Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Discretionary Grant to obtain funding to widen State Highway 28 located over Pensacola Dam and its Auxiliary Spillways. On behalf of the Mayes Emergency Services Trust Authority, I write this letter to you confirming my support of this important project.

From a historical perspective, the bridge located across the Pensacola Dam was first constructed back in the late 1930's. Fast forward almost eighty years later, and the bridge is now classified by ODOT as "at-risk" of becoming structurally deficient. ODOT's safety data also confirms that this bridge, the narrowest two-lane bridge in the State of Oklahoma, has overall collision rates that are 34% above the statewide average rates between the years of 2014 and 2016. Due to increasing standards of care required for the treatment of the sick and injured and the distance from definitive treatment hospitals, my agency utilizes medium duty (larger) ambulances to carry the necessary equipment needed for emergency patients. The narrowness of the bridges listed here affect patient care by increasing response time(s) and also has been a factor in collisions involving ambulances, thankfully nothing more serious than my ambulance's mirrors striking other larger vehicle mirrors but nonetheless these collisions for my service occur 10 to 1 on these bridges compared to any other location we travel.

Partial funding, of sources both private and State, has been set aside by both GRDA and ODOT, both of whom share responsibility for the three bridges, in order to enhance and repair the structures. A large variety of local stakeholders have been actively involved in this request for funding, including but certainly not limited to, the local communities of Tia Juana, Langley and Disney, as well as local emergency responders and county governments.

The rehabilitation and widening of State Highway 28 is an extremely vital project to the region of northeastern Oklahoma due to the many benefits that SH 28 provides to the region. SH 28 allows for the daily movement of RVs, ambulances, fire trucks, boats, semi-trucks, and camping trailers as well as goods and services amongst

the small and rural communities located in the area. It also allows tourists and area residents to have access to the plethora of state parks, resorts, and marinas located around Grand Lake o' the Cherokees.

In conclusion, the project to rehabilitate and widen SH 28 over Pensacola Dam is very significant to the region of northeastern Oklahoma as it will increase both vehicle and pedestrian safety and extend the life of the three bridges. Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts and support of this request for funding.

Sincerely,



Director of Mayes Emergency Services Trust Authority

