



**G.T. Bynum**  
**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

May 5, 2020

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

**Re: Oklahoma Department of Transportation BUILD grant application McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS) - Mooring Modernization Project**

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am pleased to submit this letter of support for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Investment (BUILD) discretionary grant application for critical mooring improvements on the most inland areas of the *McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System*.

The northernmost point of the MKARNS is at the Tulsa Port of Catoosa, providing our city with a cost-efficient transportation option for bulk commodities and goods to travel to and from the Gulf of Mexico. The City of Tulsa greatly benefits from this waterway, which moved an estimated \$3.5 billion in goods in 2018.

As Mayor of Tulsa, I support ODOT's vision to improve mooring systems on the MKARNS to ensure the safety of barges during Oklahoma's extreme weather events. After two barges broke loose from moorings during devastating flooding in our state last year, the panic of not knowing where the runaway barges would strike on the system was felt not just in Oklahoma but in Arkansas and the region as well. It was very fortunate that the eventual crashes of the barges into a dam didn't cause catastrophic damage or loss of life. I echo many of the voices calling for the mooring improvements to be made before another emergency like this occurs and endangers the safety of the public and this critical transportation route.

The safe operation of the MKARNS is critical to keep commodities and commerce moving and to support the network of jobs and companies dependent upon it in our city.

I appreciate your consideration of ODOT's application for this BUILD grant and your support of transportation infrastructure projects in Oklahoma. Please contact my office if needed as you consider this important project.

Best regards,

G.T. Bynum  
Mayor  
City of Tulsa