June 21, 2018

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:

This letter expresses the support of the South Grand Lake Area Chamber of Commerce for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Grand River Dam Authority's (GRDA) $10,000,000 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 $15,000,000 state and private investments in order to extend the life of three bridges through providing enhanced structural capacity while increasing safety for vehicles and pedestrians.

The Pensacola Dam bridges were constructed in 1940 and significant rehabilitation and widening is needed so they 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 Pensacola Dam Bridge is the narrowest two-lane bridge in Oklahoma and is classified by ODOT as "at-risk" of becoming structurally deficient. The dam itself is listed on the National Register of Historic Places due to it being the longest multi-arch dam in the United States and the only multi-arch dam in Oklahoma. The Pensacola Dam Historic District consists of the dam, powerhouse, substation, two spillways and intake structure.

The three SH 28 bridges are traveled daily by a combination of semi-trucks, recreation vehicles, boats, camping trailers, ambulances, fire trucks and other wide loads. It is also an important tourism connector route, as it is the primary thoroughfare to multiple resorts, marinas, and state parks around Grand Lake. During the summer months, the population surrounding Grand Lake almost triples thus placing additional demand on these structures. The three bridges are functionally obsolete and structurally inadequate due to age, narrow width and excessive loads. ODOT safety data shows that the overall collision rates along the project area are 33% above the statewide average rates between 2013 and 2015.

GRDA and ODOT have shared responsibility for the three bridges and both have allocated partial funding to repair and enhance the structure. They agree that the project is important to the future of northeastern Oklahoma in terms of movement of goods and services as well as regional tourism. Further, rural and small 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, emergency responders, county government and other interested parties.

We believe that ODOT and GRDA's SH 28 Bridge Widening project is a strong candidate for the BUILD Discretionary Grant program, as it is a significant project for the public safety and prosperity of northeast Oklahoma.

Many of our chamber members not only live and work in the Langley, Disney and Tia Juana areas but so their customers who are the base for their livelihood. This project will directly impact our communities and we feel this improvement will guarantee the long term success and life of our area lake businesses.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this important project.

Sincerely,

Amanda Warren

Amanda Warren
Executive Director
South Grand Lake Area Chamber of Commerce