



# Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

PO Box 1210 ♦ Durant, OK 74702-1210 ♦ Phone: 580.924.8280

Gary Batton  
*Chief*

Jack Austin, Jr.  
*Assistant Chief*

July 8, 2022

Tim Gatz, Executive Director  
Oklahoma Department of Transportation  
200 N.E. 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Dear Mr. Gatz:

Please accept this letter from the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma in support of the South Central Oklahoma Regional Transportation Organization's request for the replacement of the Roosevelt Memorial Bridge over Lake Texoma on U.S. Highway 70. The bridge was built in 1942 and after 80 years, the bridge has become functionally obsolete and at risk of becoming structurally deficient. Its sufficiency rating has continually decreased in previous years and will persist, if not replaced.

The traffic demand on US Highway 70 has increased significantly since the bridge was built and continues to increase annually. The average daily traffic along this stretch is 7,800. This two-lane bridge is inadequately able to service all types of traffic through the area. It cannot and will not be able to accommodate the traffic flow and economic development over the next 10-20 years. A four-lane highway is needed to increase load capacity that will allow access for all types of traffic.

Replacement of the bridge is imperative to the improvement and capability of the U.S. Highway 70 corridor to provide expected future increases in the flow of traffic and freight movement across Southern Oklahoma. The bridge's current structure and condition restrict the economic development such as travel, tourism, and the free flow of freight traffic in our region.

Although the Roosevelt Memorial Bridge is included in your 8 Year Construction Work Plan, it is not guaranteed that it will be replaced due to the project not being fully funded. Being that the replacement will be a costly and lengthy process, we implore you to begin the process to secure funding for this historic project and begin replacing the bridge.

We support the South Central Oklahoma Regional Transportation Organization's efforts and resolution for the replacement of the Roosevelt Memorial Bridge to improve the traffic corridor and public safety in our region. Thank you for your consideration. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Gary Batton, Chief  
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma