

October 21, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: Bridge Investment Program for I-44 Bridge Rehabilitation in Oklahoma City

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

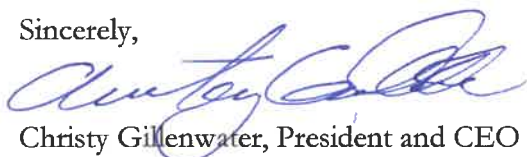
On behalf of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, a large regional economic development organization, I am writing to express our organization's strong support of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) application for a Bridge Investment Program (BIP) discretionary grant to assist with the **I-44 Bridge Rehabilitation Project in Oklahoma City**.

Specifically, this critical project will rehabilitate two bridges spanning the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and Black Gold Drive. Both bridges are expected to become structurally deficient over the next few years. As you are aware, I-44 is a critical strategic transportation asset that connects multiple nationwide interstate facilities. Every year, I-44 moves millions of people and billions of dollars of freight, many of which move through Oklahoma City and the bridges which are the focus of ODOT's application.

Currently, these bridges are rated in "Fair" condition but are at risk of falling into "Poor" condition within the next two to three years. Without rehabilitation, these bridges will act as a barrier to the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in Oklahoma, resulting in a deterioration of the regional and national supply chain and interstate travel. To avoid this outcome, the goals of the proposed project are to improve operations on this key corridor of I-44 and ensure the bridge structures meet current design standards.

In conclusion, our Chamber emphatically supports the I-44 Bridge Rehabilitation Project in Oklahoma City for its contribution to the necessary infrastructure improvements for this vital corridor for the nationwide movement of people and goods. We respectfully urge your support of full funding for the project. Thank you for your consideration and feel free to call on us should you have questions.

Sincerely,



Christy Gillenwater, President and CEO