

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

July 9, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We strongly support the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT's) application for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program to modernize strategically located moorings located in the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System (MKARNS).

The MKARNS is a critical artery of our national inland waterways system, serving a 12-state region including Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas, Texas, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Missouri, and Idaho. Moving cargo by water is an environmentally and economically efficient way to move goods around the country and deliver exports to the rest of the world. With demand for waterborne cargo set to increase steadily over the next decade, it must be a priority to invest in our inland waterways so the American economy can grow and compete.

This project will construct up to 32 strategically-located moorings along the MKARNS and replace obsolete anchors with modernized systems to enable safe harbor for mariners, reliability in the event of flooding, and reduce ongoing maintenance costs at the ports along the MKARNS. This project will also replace obsolete anchors and tie-down mechanisms currently unable to withstand the major flood events the region has experienced in recent years. The modernization of the anchorage systems will protect tangential surface infrastructure as well, significantly limiting the risk of future collisions with highway bridges, locks, and dams downriver. This investment will improve the overall quality and safety of the MKARNS system and is a step towards preparing for an increase in barge traffic and ensuring the waterway's sustainability for decades to come.

We thank you in advance for your strong consideration of ODOT's application for this RAISE grant. Please contact Victor Sarmiento, on my staff, at victor_sarmiento@inhofe.senate.gov if you need any further assistance as you consider this important project.

Sincerely,



James M. Inhofe
United States Senator



James Lankford
United States Senator



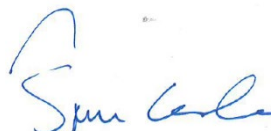
Kevin Hern
Member of Congress



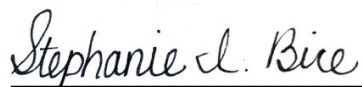
Markwayne Mullin
Member of Congress



Frank D. Lucas
Member of Congress



Tom Cole
Member of Congress



Stephanie Bice
Member of Congress