

April 23, 2020

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue Southeast
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Billings County Little Missouri River Crossing (LMRC) Safety and Mobility Project
FY 2020 BUILD Grant Program

Secretary Chao:

I am writing in partnership with the Medora City Council in support of the application being submitted by Billings County for the Little Missouri River Crossing Safety and Mobility Project.

The City of Medora is the County seat of Billings County, on the western edge of North Dakota, in the North Dakota Badlands. The community is the gateway to the south unit of Theodore National Park and home of the famous Medora Musical. Medora is the only incorporated community. Our economy is primarily based in agriculture, natural resources (specifically oil and gas) and tourism.

Federal level infrastructure investment is important everywhere, however, I would argue perhaps most important in rural areas such as ours. With an estimated population of just over 100 people in Medora and just under 1,000 in the whole of Billings County, we simply do not have the population base to complete substantial infrastructure projects without federal assistance. That does not, however, make those investments less important. Despite the lower number of people utilizing our transportation system, our roads and bridges, as well as our other community infrastructure, plays a vital role in the health, wellbeing, and economic stability of our community.

This federal investment will allow the county to continue to make investments into critical transportation infrastructure. The proposed Little Missouri River Crossing would create a safe, reliable bridge that would improve local and regional connectivity, increased agricultural, natural resource and tourist commerce, and, most importantly, increased safety for emergency personnel/vehicles and the general traveling public. Medora and Billings County depend on easy and navigable transportation to ensure our way of life and to continue to welcome tourists from all over the world into our unique community.

As part of the Medora City Council, I support this project and the approval of a BUILD grant to ensure completion. This project has been part of transportation planning and discussions since the 1930s and it is time the issue is addressed. We believe it is important to Medora, Billings County and the State of North Dakota and appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Todd Corneil, Mayor
City of Medora