

March 24, 2020

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

RE: FY 2020 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development Grant Program
Billings County Little Missouri River Crossing (LMRC) Safety and Mobility Project

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing in full support of the Billings County Little Missouri River Crossing Safety and Mobility Project. This project is important not only to Billings County and the community of Medora, but also to the State of North Dakota.

The proposed project would construct a new bridge over the river between the existing crossings at Medora, the I-94 bridges, and the Long X Bridge. There is approximately 70 miles between these existing crossings, necessitating ranchers, tourists, and emergency personnel travel significant distances to access existing east-west crossings.

The proposed project would provide a safe, reliable connection between the east and west sides of the Little Missouri River and would improve local connectivity, avenues for commerce, and linkage between the neighboring county. Additionally, it would provide access for emergency services vehicles, resulting in reduced response time in this region.

The lack of safe and consistent east-west crossing opportunities in this area has been an issue that has been discussed and studied on and off since the 1930's. The Little Missouri River Crossing project would address these longstanding concerns and provide the opportunity for Billings County to build the bridge they need to improve local, regional and statewide transportation resources. Thank you for your consideration in assisting Billings County in their efforts to keep their residents and tourists safe.

Sincerely,



Senator Dale Patten
North Dakota State Senator