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April 16, 2020

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

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

The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) is in support of the 2020 BUILD application for Billings County Little Missouri River Crossing Safety and Mobility Project. The Little Missouri River Crossing has been a project that has been discussed and considered since the 1930s. We recognize that, upon completion, the proposed road/bridge would be classified as local, but we believe and support the County's assertion that it provides not just local, but regional and statewide impacts, especially as it related to the ability to support agricultural commerce and tourism.

You will note that the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) related to this project was, in fact, on the NDDOT STIP in 2019. Upon completion of the EIS, it was removed, but not because it is no longer one of the NDDOT priorities, but because there is currently not adequate funding to support it. We are, however, continuing in our partnership with Billings County in determining how to move the project forward and are in full support of their request for BUILD federal assistance as part of a feasible funding package.

We believe this project will substantially improve local and regional transportation safety and accessibility. The project reflects needs documented in local, regional, and statewide plans to support both safety and mobility. The project will drastically improve connectivity and will allow car, truck, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic the opportunity to more safely and easily move throughout Billings County.

For these reasons, a BUILD grant will greatly assist Billings County, the community of Medora, and the state of North Dakota. Thank you for your time and consideration of this application.

Sincerely,



William T. Panos
Director

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