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May 19, 2022

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

RE: MPDG Application for At-Grade Rail Safety Improvements – Heartland Flyer Northern Extension

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Government's (ACOG), I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's Multimodal Projects Discretionary Grant (MPDG) application for the At-Grade Rail Safety Improvements to Reestablish the Heartland Flyer Northern Extension.

This project will improve safety at 52 at-grade crossing locations by systematically updating the at-grade crossing warning devices to facilitate safe and efficient freight and new passenger rail operations. Additionally, these upgrades will aide in reestablishing passenger rail service north into Kansas.

The at-grade railroad safety improvements will include 15 crossings in the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) Boundary. The safety enhancements include, but are not limited to;

- Improving the smoothness of the crossing surface. A rough surface may contribute to a collision by diverting the road user's attention from the prime tasks of observing the crossing signals and looking for a train.

- Flashing-light signals, which are a fundamental active warning device. The flashing-light signals consist of two red light units that flash alternately at a rate of 35 to 65 times per minute.

- Audible bells sounds to improve safety for non-motorized road users such as pedestrians and bicyclists.

I urge your support in awarding funding to this project so these critical transportation improvements may occur.

Thank you for your consideration of Oklahoma Transportation's MPDG application for At-Grade Rail Safety Improvements to Reestablish the Heartland Flyer Northern Extension. Please feel free to call on us should you have questions or if you require additional information.

Sincerely,

Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director