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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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May 19, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I strongly support the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT's) Rural Surface Transportation Grant (RURAL) application under the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Opportunity to add shoulders and rumble strips to dangerous two-lane rural highways.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) found that in 2019 that 45% of traffic fatalities occurred in rural areas where only 19% of the population live. The fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) was 1.9 times higher in rural areas. Investment in safety improvements along these un-safe highways and bridges is crucial to provide equity among historically disadvantaged communities in rural areas.

This network of projects will include widening shoulders, repairing at-risk bridge infrastructure, adding rumble strips, and other safety improvements designed to reduce the number of fatalities in heavy freight traveled rural areas. This project provides much needed facilities for bicycle and pedestrian safety along the roadways. The network of project contributes to the resiliency and state of good repair to underserved communities where freight traffic has added unequivocal damage to roadway facilities. This investment will improve the overall quality of life and safety for all multimodal rural highway users for decades to come.

I thank you in advance for your strong consideration of ODOT's application for this RURAL grant. Please contact Sofia Deiro, on my staff, at sofia.deiro@mail.house.gov if you need any further assistance as you consider this important project.

Sincerely,

Tom Cole
Member of Congress