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Julie L. Lorenz, Secretary



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Laura Kelly, Governor

June 21, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

On behalf of the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), I am writing to support Ellis County's efforts to seek funding from the federal Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) discretionary grant program for the Northwest Business Corridor project. The Northwest Business Corridor provides four principal advantages to Ellis County and northwest Kansas:

- Better access to federal highways for the transportation-dependent businesses located along the Corridor.
- Improved safety for the workers and visitors who travel the Corridor on a daily basis.
- A bypass route around the City of Hays for large loads that cannot safely pass under the I-70 bridge over U.S. Route 183.
- The potential for continued development of the business corridor, including new developments to serve the traveling public.

Creates a prime opportunity to enhance freight movement and economic development. The Northwest Business Corridor Project provides a bypass route around the city of Hays for freight movement, which is particularly important to oversized freight loads from existing industry in the region and continued economic development in Northwest Kansas.

Provides improvements needed for business retention. An important piece of a thriving economy is a strong transportation system that can meet the needs of existing businesses as well as new businesses. A key employer in the area, Hess Services, continues to expand and grow its business. This project will have an affect on their ability to stay in the area as they grow.

KDOT asks the U.S. DOT to give favorable consideration to the Northwest Business Corridor Project application submitted by Ellis County. KDOT is prepared to help make this project a reality with a BUILD grant award. BUILD funds will make it possible for our region to further strengthen the impact of decades of significant state and local investments in this important corridor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie Lorenz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning.

Julie L. Lorenz
Secretary of Transportation
Director of Kansas Turnpike Authority