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**Committee Assignments**  
Vice-Chair  
Ways and Means  
Financial Institutions and Insurance  
Joint Committee on State Building  
Construction  
Member  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

May 30, 2019

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


Dear Secretary Chao:

Please accept this letter of support for 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. As the State Senator for the district in which the project is located, I am familiar with the needs driving this request.

I personally toured the project site in February of this year and can attest to the fact that the current roadway was not designed for the volume or type of traffic now utilizing the Corridor. This growth in traffic is due to private-sector investment, and Ellis County needs resources to meet the needs of these businesses. This project will improve safety for the many residents who utilize the Corridor to access work, worship and recreation. It will also complement the City of Hays' North Vine Street project – approved in last year's BUILD cycle – by providing an alternate route for large loads that cannot safely pass under the I-70 bridge over U.S. Route 183. I am also excited about the potential for future investment that an improved Northwest Business Corridor provides.

This project will benefit not just Ellis County but vast swaths of my rural district in northwestern Kansas, as the employers along this Corridor draw employees from a wide area. I would welcome contact from your office should you have any questions about this project. I hope that you will look favorably upon Ellis County's grant request.

Sincerely,

  
Senator Richard (Rick) Billinger  
Kansas 40th Senate District