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

Re: Bridge Investment Program- Kay County, Oklahoma

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing in support of Kay County's Bridge Investment Program planning grant for the Hunnewell Bridge (NBI 01630). The deterioration of the bridge poses significant safety risks to the public. The bridge is currently closed, but off-road vehicles can still maneuver around the bridge and frequently travel across it. The backup of debris in the river channel is another concern. It is causing erosion to the neighboring farm. The planning grant will study what is causing the continued erosion, either the bridge design or the debris itself. Lastly, due to the closure of the bridge, residents living in Kay County must travel an additional 11.4 vehicle miles, to access the closest functional Chikaskia River bridge in Kay County.

The closing of the Hunnewell Bridge five years ago has negatively affected the rural residents of Kay County. It is critical this bridge be replaced in order to complete the transportation network of the county. Funding for design analysis, survey, geotechnical investigations, and a hydrologic and hydraulic study is the first step towards this process.

We urge USDOT to fund this planning grant as the project aligns with overall USDOT goals of removing transportation related disparities and the BIP goal of removing the number of bridges in poor condition.

Sincerely,

Melissa Kelle, Owner
Jim Kelle, Owner