

Friday, November 17, 2023

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

Dear Honorable Secretary Buttigieg:

As the “*voice of trucking*” in Oklahoma, we represent the unified interest of our member companies that literally have a front row seat to the needs of infrastructure across our state. Having polled our members, the Oklahoma Trucking Association, believes this project meets the desired goals state for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation’s (ODOT) application for the Bridge Investment Program (BIP). This project would improve the connection of I-35 over the Oklahoma River, ensuring that this critical corridor will continue to serve the state and nation’s interstate system.

As “*the voice of trucking*” safety is imperative to the industry, and we believe the following to be beneficial: Interstate 35 in Oklahoma City intersects two other major east-west freight corridors, I-40 and I-44, making the I-35 bridges in Oklahoma City critically located at the crossroads of intercontinental movement, linking the west and east coasts to major urban areas throughout the country. The existing northbound and southbound I-35 bridges that cross the Oklahoma River do not meet the current and future demands of a highly travelled interstate corridor. The two bridges in Oklahoma City see nearly 18,000 trucks per day and ODOT has identified the corridor as a freight bottleneck. Additionally, neighborhoods south of the river lack connections to Central Oklahoma City for access to healthcare, education, and employment.

The project proposes to replace the two existing I-35 bridges over the Oklahoma River, including a ramp bridge connection, and the addition of a pedestrian bridge to provide multimodal access across the river. ODOT has secured commitments from the City of Oklahoma City to contribute to the pedestrian, bike, and scooter bridge. Completion of this project would provide safety for freight and pedestrians, increase capacity for future generations, and allow for continued contributions to the national economy.

The Oklahoma Trucking Association strongly supports this project for its vital contribution to the region, state and nation. We urge your support of full funding for the project. Thank you in advance for your strong consideration of ODOT’s application for the Bridge Investment Program. Please contact our offices if you need any further assistance as you consider this important proposal.

Sincerely,

Jim Newport  
CEO/President  
Oklahoma Trucking Association

**Mario Archaga**  
*Chairman*

**Bobby Smith**  
*First Vice Chairman*

**Carmalieta Wells**  
*Second Vice Chairman*

**Jim Newport**  
*President & CEO*

