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October 22, 2024

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

RE: Bridge Investment Program for the I-40 Arkansas River Bridge Replacement in Muskogee County, Oklahoma

Dear Secretary, Buttigieg:

We are pleased to write this letter in support of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) application for the Bridge Investment Program (BIP). This project will replace the I-40 bridge over the Arkansas River at the Muskogee and Sequoyah County line in eastern Oklahoma.

The I-40 bridge over the Arkansas River is a fracture critical bridge that carries a disproportionately high number of truck traffic. The average annual daily traffic count is 21,000 vehicles with an overwhelming 30% being truck traffic. These conditions have put added fatigue on the structure and reduced the anticipated lifespan of the bridge. The fracture damage cannot be repaired with maintenance or rehabilitation and can only be corrected by full replacement.

The I-40 Arkansas River bridge replacement project will construct safe, resilient infrastructure on the national Primary Highway Freight System (PHFS). The PHFS is identified as the most critical highway portions of the U.S. freight transportation system. Creating this dependable freight connection is a valuable investment in the economic success of the nation.

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, *Johnny Pollard*