

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 23, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am pleased to write this letter in support of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT's) application for a Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) to make safety improvements to over 40 miles of rural 2-lane highways in Oklahoma.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) found in 2019 that 45% of traffic fatalities occurred in rural areas where only 19% of the population live. The fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) was 1.9 times higher in rural areas. In Oklahoma, 65% of fatalities occur in rural areas where 34% of the state's population lives. Investment in safety improvements along rural highways and bridges is crucial to provide equity among historically disadvantaged communities.

This network of projects will include widening shoulders, repairing at-risk bridge infrastructure, adding rumble strips, and other safety improvements designed to reduce the number of fatalities in heavy freight-traveled rural areas. This project provides much needed facilities for bicycle and pedestrian safety along the roadways, while contributing to the resiliency and state of good repair for rural highways. This investment will improve the overall quality of life and safety for all multimodal rural highway users for decades to come.

I thank you in advance for your strong consideration of ODOT's application for this MPDG opportunity. Please contact Victor Sarmiento, on my staff, at [victor\\_sarmiento@inhofe.senate.gov](mailto:victor_sarmiento@inhofe.senate.gov) if you need any further assistance as you consider this important project.

Sincerely,



James M. Inhofe  
United States Senator