

Name
Business (if applicable)
Address
City, State

June XX, 2019

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

Subject: Letter of Support – U.S. Highway 14 Four-Lane Expansion Project
Better Utilizing Infrastructure to Leverage Development (BUILD) Funding Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing in support of the U.S. Highway 14 four-lane expansion project application by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) for grant funds from the U.S. Department of Transportation's BUILD program.

Highway 14 travels in an east-west direction through southern Minnesota and has been designated as a primary corridor for connecting regional trade centers and other integral roadways, including Highway 60, Interstate 35 and Highway 169. Rural communities rely on Highway 14 for commerce, agriculture, manufacturing and accessibility to jobs, healthcare and other destinations reaching beyond Minnesota.

Highway 14 has experienced significant growth in traffic, from local communities and commuters to agriculture and freight. As a testament to the significance of Highway 14, heavy commercial volumes range from 12-17 percent of all traffic. Across Minnesota state highways the average heavy commercial traffic is approximately 8 percent. At the same time as it has experienced growth, Highway 14 has seen an increase in crashes. It is now referred to by many as one of the deadliest stretches of highway in Minnesota.

Since the 1960s, achieving the goal of converting Highway 14 from a two-lane to a four-lane divided highway has been an uphill battle. As of today, only 12 miles are left to fund until all 110 miles of Highway 14 from New Ulm to Rochester is a completed four-lane highway. This remaining two-lane segment from Nicollet to New Ulm continues to have safety issues including a recent fatality in 2018.

The BUILD program seeks to improve access to reliable and safe transportation in rural areas of varying sizes, which is what the Highway 14 four-lane expansion project plans to deliver. The improvements from this project will encourage economic growth and strengthen a major transportation artery in the heart of southern Minnesota.

Countless businesses, residents, cities, counties, farmers, manufacturers, legislators, and families throughout southern Minnesota have come together to stand united behind the four-lane expansion of Highway 14. We've worked tirelessly and passionately, and not without successes and failures along the way. We won't rest until the last 12 miles are complete, knowing we have a safe and reliable infrastructure to support the region's needs.

Thank you for your consideration of the Highway 14 four-lane expansion project application for BUILD grant funding.

Sincerely,

Name
Title
Business