

AMY KLOBUCHAR
MINNESOTA

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RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 28, 2018

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

Re: BUILD Grant Program, Polk County

Dear Secretary Chao:

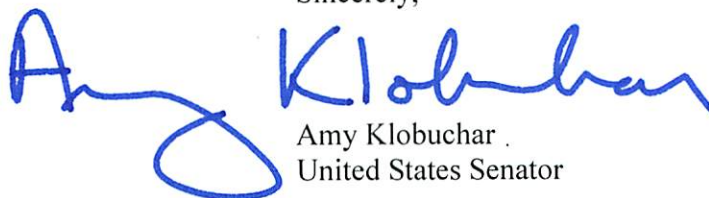
I am writing in support of Polk County's application for funding through the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program. Polk County, Minnesota, in partnership with Traill County, North Dakota, is seeking funding through this program to support the Multi-State Regional Connectivity Project, which would replace the Nielsville Bridge 5767 on the Red River.

Since 2015, the Nielsville Bridge has been closed, hindering emergency response services and damaging the local economies on both sides of the Red River. Members of the community are especially reliant on transportation infrastructure and the loss of the Nielsville Bridge has severely impaired the ability for local farmers, manufacturers, and businesses to get their products to processing facilities, transportation hubs, or marketplaces. Prior to its closure, the Nielsville Bridge served an average of 500 vehicles per day during peak harvest season. Since its closure, drivers have been rerouted a minimum of 11 miles to the next nearest crossing, creating additional delays. Businesses in the region have reported a 20 to 50 percent drop in revenue since the closure.

Funding from the grant would combine with local resources to replace the Nielsville Bridge and apply necessary improvements to the bridge approaches, ultimately improving the safety of this connection. Replacing the bridge and modernizing roadway approaches would restore a critical economic connection for agriculture, agribusiness, and commerce for both states.

Again, I support Polk County's application for funding through the BUILD program, as it will support vital transportation infrastructure improvements in Northwestern Minnesota. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Rommel Lee in my Minnesota office at (612) 727-5220 or by email at Rommel_Lee@klobuchar.senate.gov.

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator