

July 1, 2019

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

Subject: Neilsville Bridge Replacement, 2019 BUILD Grant

Dear Secretary Elaine Chao,

As small business owners, we support agriculture in North Dakota and Minnesota as the largest local vendor of small aircraft and parts for crop dusting and general aviation, and as a local airstrip.

Located in Cummings, North Dakota the quickest and most direct route to our shop for half our customer base was the Nielsville Bridge connecting North Dakota and Minnesota across the Red River. The bridge has been closed for four years now following insurmountable structural deficiencies.

As a significant regional business who depends on the bridge and as local residents who frequently used the bridge, we are writing to express our support for the 2019 BUILD Grant application by Traill and Polk Counties and the Multi-State Regional Connectivity Project to replace the Nielsville Bridge with a combination of federal and local matching funds.

Approving the application would both reopen this important economic corridor and redesign the bridge to avoid frequent flooding issues, which rendered the bridge unusable for up to two weeks at a time several times in recent years.

The closure of the bridge has added significant travel time for communities like ours on both sides of the Red River. This has disrupted emergency response capabilities and caused many area businesses to report a 20-50 percent drop in revenue since the closure.

We appreciate your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,



Mike Deck, Peg Klemetson

Owners

Sky Tractor LLC, Hillsboro, North Dakota