



March 13, 2020

Secretary Elaine Chao
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Secretary Elaine Chao,

As an ag business owned by local growers, Central Valley Bean Cooperative supports the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) application for FY 2020 by the Multi-State Regional Connectivity Project, Traill County, and Polk County.

The closure of the Neilsville Bridge across the Red River is causing drivers to be rerouted a minimum of 11 miles, causing delays, straining the region's rural transportation network and stifling economic activity. Area businesses report a 20-50 percent drop in revenue following the bridge closure.

The project will restore regional mobility, decrease travel times, increase public safety, and reestablish an integral transportation link to serve North Dakota and Minnesota and support the regional and national economy.

If Polk County's 2020 BUILD Grant application is successful, federal funds would be leveraged with non-federal matching funds to replace Nielsville Bridge and support our local agribusiness, which is the backbone of the economy for both Traill and Polk Counties.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Daniel J. Fuglesten". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Daniel Fuglesten, General Manager

Central Valley Bean in Buxton, North Dakota