



Southwestern Commission
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April 24, 2020

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

Please accept this letter of support for the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT's) application *Continuing Corridor K: Connecting People, Goods, and Services* to the U.S. Department of Transportation's BUILD Program. This project is the outcome of extensive coordination between government agencies, local officials, and environmental stakeholders to develop a project that meets the local and broader needs for reliability and connectivity, while maintaining environmental sensitivity.

Corridor K is critical for reliable travel throughout western North Carolina as well as for local trips within Graham County. Increased connectivity is crucial for residents who must travel out of the county for jobs, healthcare, and other critical services, as well as for commercial traffic transporting goods in and out of North Carolina. These roadway improvements will bring about economic benefits for a rural county with a declining workforce.

The Southwestern Commission Council of Governments and our Rural Transportation Planning Organization have collaborated with our local government partners and NCDOT for decades to complete Corridor K. Today we are closer than we have ever been to achieving this goal. Thank you for your favorable consideration of NCDOT's application *Continuing Corridor K: Connecting People, Goods, and Services* for federal BUILD grant funding to accelerate its construction.

Sincerely,

Sarah Thompson,
Executive Director

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Macon County
Franklin
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**Eastern Band
of Cherokee
Indians**