

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 7, 2017

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
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Dear Secretary Chao,

I am writing to express my support for the City of Kansas City, Missouri in their application to receive the U.S. Department of Transportation's Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant. The City of Kansas City, Missouri, in collaboration with stakeholders, is planning to build a new bridge to replace the aging Buck O'Neil Bridge over the Missouri river. The construction of this bridge will improve traffic flow, increase safety, and provide a positive economic impact to a vibrant and growing city.

The Buck O'Neil Bridge has always been a critical piece of Kansas City's vast infrastructure network, however, the bridge is facing a convergence of challenges that require its replacement. The construction of a new bridge would allow travelers to experience a 21st century crossing, improving upon a bridge built before the advent of the interstate system. Each day, 45,000 vehicles cross, linking the rapidly growing downtown and communities north of the Missouri River. This number will increase 33 percent by 2040, worsening the existing congestion problems. Kansas City is home to the country's largest rail center by tonnage, which will be enhanced through improvements to freight and Port KC infrastructure, and the improved bridge would remove weight restrictions which limit the rate of travel for truck freight.

If funding is secured, the city will begin construction while keeping the current structure open for traffic, allowing for substantially less interruption to the current transportation network. Improvements will also be made to interchanges at downtown Kansas City and the Charles B. Wheeler Downtown Airport. The community will benefit by the implementation of a new bicycle and pedestrian crossing of the Missouri River

This project is supported by the City of Kansas City, Missouri, MoDOT, the Mid-America Regional Council, Jackson, Clay, and Platte counties, as well as multiple municipalities and businesses in the Kansas City metro area. Thank you in advance for your full and fair consideration of this application. Please keep me apprised of the progress of this request.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill
United States Senator