

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612
(785) 296-4683
barb.wasinger@house.ks.gov



1602 ELM STREET
HAYS, KANSAS 67601-3741
(785) 317-9386

BARB WASINGER
111TH DISTRICT

May 30, 2019

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing in support of Ellis County's efforts to seek funding from the federal Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) discretionary grant program for the Northwest Business Corridor project. This project provides four key improvements that will benefit the regional economy of northwest Kansas:

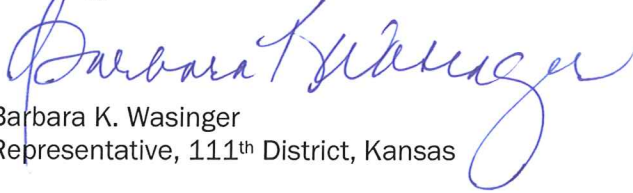
- Better access to federal highways for the transportation-dependent businesses located along the Corridor.
- Improved safety for the workers and visitors who travel the Corridor on a daily basis.
- A bypass route around the City of Hays for large loads that cannot safely pass under the I-70 bridge over U.S. Route 183.
- The potential for continued development of the business corridor, including new developments to serve the traveling public.

I live in Hays and am a former County Commissioner. As the current State Representative for this region, I organized a visit to the project site in February of this year and can attest to the fact that the current roadway was not designed for the volume or type of traffic now utilizing the Corridor. This growth in traffic is due to private-sector investment, and Ellis County needs resources to meet the needs of these businesses. I have traveled to Hess Services and Goodman Energy Center, both located on this corridor, and I can personally tell you how dangerous it is. I have seen large commercial vehicles on that route and know it is essential to expand the route – for their safety and the residents who travel that road.

This project will improve safety for the many residents who utilize the Corridor to access work, worship and recreation. It will also complement the City of Hays' North Vine Street project – approved in last year's BUILD cycle – by providing an alternate route for large loads that cannot safely pass under the I-70 bridge over U.S. Route 183. The potential for future investment that an improved Northwest Business Corridor provides is vital to our economic welfare as well as a large section of Northwest Kansas.

I hope that the U.S. Department of Transportation will look favorably upon Ellis County's grant request. Do not hesitate to contact my office to answer further questions about my support for the Northwest Business Corridor.

Sincerely,



Barbara K. Wasinger
Representative, 111th District, Kansas