

United States Senate

July 24, 2019

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write to express my support for the joint application submitted by Macon County and the City of Decatur to the Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD) discretionary grants program offered by the U.S. Department of Transportation. This funding will enable the County to provide a more efficient supply chain for area farmers and enhance freight mobility in the region by addressing critical state of good repair issues on two local bridges.

Macon County and the City of Decatur are proposing the replacement of the two structurally deficient Reas Bridges outside Decatur as part of the larger East Beltway project. Decatur is home to production facilities for two Fortune 500 companies, Archer Daniels Midland and Caterpillar in addition to another major agricultural products producer, Tate and Lyle. Decatur also hosts two Class I railroads and two short line railroads. The Reas Bridges are critical to moving freight from Central Illinois out to nearby metropolitan areas including Chicago, Indianapolis and St. Louis. However, those bridges were recently weight restricted forcing grain trucks and other heavy vehicles onto local streets causing significant delays and congestion issues. This project will address a critical state of good repair issue, provide better access for rural populations to the services they need, help expand fiber in Decatur and provide a more efficient supply chain for area farmers and businesses.

As a U.S. Senator and member of the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, modernizing Illinois' infrastructure and transportation systems is a top priority. Funding for the Reas Bridges replacement project supports the core goals of the BUILD program by promoting regional connectivity, enhancing the efficient movement of freight and supporting the local economy.

I urge you to give Macon County and the City of Decatur's application your full and fair consideration for BUILD funding offered by the U.S. Department of Transportation. If you have any questions, please contact my State Director, Cameron Joost, by calling (217) 528-6124.

Sincerely,



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator