

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 1, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

We write to request your full and fair consideration of the Colorado Department of Transportation's (CDOT) recent applications for the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program. The applications request funding for three of CDOT's major projects: 1) highway improvements that will help connect all El Paso County regional military installations; 2) median cable guard rail installations throughout the state; and 3) new passing lanes and runaway truck ramps throughout the state. CDOT, Metropolitan planning organizations, the Colorado Transportation Commission, and impacted Chamber of Commerce organizations have prioritized these projects.

Highway improvements near El Paso County military installations, including Fort Carson, Peterson Air Force Base, Schriever Air Force Base, and Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station, will have a positive effect on our state and local economies, regional workforce, and transportation technology innovation. For example, the Global Positioning System (GPS) Operations Center at Schriever supports mapping and global commerce worldwide, for both military and civilian purposes. The GPS operations workforce and civilian contractors drive innovation while providing capabilities that are foundational to a wide array of transportation technologies. The State of Colorado and its partners have emphasized the importance of transportation infrastructure in providing access to these facilities and supporting their missions. Improvements would include work on SH 94, S. Academy Blvd., I-25, and Fort Carson Gate 19 access at Charter Oak Ranch Road.

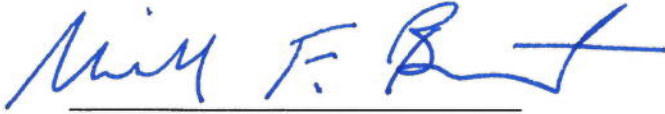
Furthermore, additions to median cable guardrails on strategic highway corridors will undoubtedly save lives of our constituents. Roadway, lane departure, and crossover crashes on divided roads can be some of the most severe type of roadway departures in our state. Deployment of a median cable barrier, such as a steel rail, is a proven and cost-effective strategy that can reduce the frequency and severity of these significant crashes.

Due to continued demand and growth in commerce and economic development in Colorado, CDOT has identified specific locations throughout the state that have the potential to see drastic improvement in safety conditions via restored or new passing lanes and truck escape ramps. Truck passing lanes alleviate long queues and poor performance on roadways while also being a cost-efficient solution. Passing lanes decrease the likelihood of head-on crashes that often result in fatalities or serious injuries. Truck escape ramps have also been an effective method to transfer and gradually dissipate a runaway vehicle's energy.

We understand that safety, mobility, and efficiency are priorities for both the department and CDOT, and we recognize

the importance of maximizing the impact of limited resources. To that end, we strongly encourage a comprehensive and fair review of the CDOT grant applications to enhance our infrastructure. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Michael F. Bennet in blue ink.

Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator

Handwritten signature of Cory Gardner in blue ink.

Cory Gardner
United States Senator