

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 16, 2021

Mr. Amit Bose
Acting Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Acting Administrator Bose,

We are writing to express our support for the 2021 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program grant funding application submitted by the North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) on behalf of the Rural Economic Preservation through Rail Replacement project. Thank you for your consideration.

Railroads provide a critical transportation link in the shipment of bulk commodities, particularly from our rural communities. Most of the grains produced in North Dakota are shipped by rail to Pacific Northwest ports – a distance of more than 1,200 miles – which is often too far to be economically feasible for truck shipment. At the same time, shipments of fertilizer, ethanol, livestock feed, and energy products are also dependent on rail transportation. Considering our state's role as a leader in agriculture and energy production, the region's economy is particularly reliant on a safe, efficient, and reliable railroad network.

Short line railroads now operate nearly 40 percent of North Dakota's entire rail network, notably in the very rural portions of the state. Many of these branch lines are in need of rehabilitation due to age and deferred maintenance from the railroads' predecessors. This is a long and expensive process, of which rail replacement is a critical part. The NDDOT's proposed rail replacement project will help address the most burdensome portion of restoring rail lines in the Oakes area, an important connection to the national rail network for local producers.

Accordingly, we hope this application receives your favorable consideration. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. Please keep us informed of the review process, and feel free to contact our offices with any updates or inquiries you may have.

Sincerely,



John Hoeven
US Senator



Kevin Cramer
US Senator



Kelly Armstrong
Member of Congress