

June 20, 2019

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

RE: BUILD Letter of Support - Granite Falls Bridge #102 in Snohomish County, Washington

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am pleased to write this letter of support for the Granite Falls Bridge #102 Replacement project in Snohomish County, Washington, submitted under the 2019 USDOT BUILD Grant program.

Granite Falls Bridge #102 is located approximately 1.5 miles northeast of downtown Granite Falls, Washington, and carries traffic over the South Fork Stillaguamish River. The bridge provides direct access to the Mount Baker/Snoqualmie National Forest via the Mountain Loop Highway which offers recreational opportunities and tourism for people across the state of Washington. Granite Falls Bridge #102 is also part of a vital freight route for transportation of natural resources including timber, sand, gravel and aggregate resources. These resources are crucial for the Puget Sound region's infrastructure and construction industry.

The current 85-year old, 340-foot long, 20-foot wide bridge deck is not wide enough for two large vehicles to pass comfortably. This important bridge is considered fracture critical and functionally obsolete. Granite Falls Bridge #102 provides an essential route for residents living outside Granite Falls and in the communities of Verlot, Robe Valley, and Silverton. If the bridge were to fail or close, the detour route is 94 miles. Part of this 94-mile route is closed during the winter months and is built to minimal forest service standards. A closure would prevent or delay imperative emergency services; the County cannot afford to wait until the disaster falls before taking action.

I would like to request your consideration and selection of this necessary project.

Sincerely,



Dave Somers
County Executive