



STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KRISTI NOEM | GOVERNOR

July 21, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing in strong support of the Oglala Sioux Tribe's RAISE planning grant application for the BIA Route 2 Rural Safety and Regional Access project. This project will be critical for the area, and securing RAISE funds to complete necessary planning and preconstruction will help ensure the project comes to fruition.

The BIA Route 2 project aims to reconstruct 20.7 miles of arterial transportation corridor on BIA 2, which stretches from Kyle, South Dakota to South Dakota Highway 44. This route is one of Pine Ridge Reservation's arterial routes, and it connects tribal members with healthcare organizations, education centers, jobs, childcare, goods and services, and recreation opportunities throughout the northeast portion of the reservation. The proximity to agriculture and mining businesses also makes it a key truck route. The BIA Route 2 project will improve public safety in the region, stimulate the local economy, reduce travel times, and create jobs across the area.

In addition, improving this stretch of BIA Route 2 with scenic pull-offs and overlook sites would benefit a wide array of interests, including the Oglala Sioux Tribe, the Crazy Horse School in Wanblee, the Little Wound School in Kyle, the Oglala Lakota College, tourists visiting the breathtaking Badlands South Unit, and local businesses in both Wanblee and Kyle.

Too often we overlook the needs of our tribal communities, which are often areas of persistent poverty. The funding provided by a RAISE planning grant would help bring economic development to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, along with improving the quality of life for tribal members.

For these reasons, I ask for your consideration and support of this RAISE planning grant request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kristi Noem".

Kristi Noem
Governor