

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
ARMED SERVICES
BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS
FOREIGN RELATIONS
INDIAN AFFAIRS
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

July 8, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I understand that the Oglala Sioux Tribe submitted an application for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant to restore 20.7 miles of arterial transportation corridor on Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Route 2, which connects the northeastern region of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation to the main tribal service centers in Pine Ridge Village and Kyle, South Dakota. I request your full and fair consideration of the Tribe's grant application.

The proposed project would fund the necessary planning and preconstruction activities to reconstruct a dangerous stretch of BIA Route 2. The unsafe conditions are a result of sharp curves, steep ditches and side slopes, narrow road lanes, lack of roadway shoulders and the aging, deteriorating roadway surface. Unfortunately, this route is frequented daily by tribal school buses, emergency response vehicles and the traveling public. In the last decade alone, 27 crashes have occurred on this route, claiming eight lives. This project is necessary to benefit public safety, reduce travel times and stimulate the local economy.

The proposed project is also regionally and nationally significant. BIA Route 2 connects tribal members in the northeastern region of the reservation to goods and services, healthcare, education centers, employment, childcare and recreation. The route is also heavily trafficked by trucks due to its proximity to various agricultural and mining businesses. Furthermore, BIA Route 2 connects several national parks by way of the recently tribally designated Crazy Horse Scenic Byway.

I appreciate your commitment to the infrastructure needs across Indian Country. Thank you for your full and fair consideration of the Oglala Sioux Tribe's grant application.

Sincerely,



M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator