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United States Senate

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AND PENSIONS
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VETERANS' AFFAIRS
JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Dear Secretary Chao:

It has recently come to my attention that the Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District is applying for funding from the Infrastructure For Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program. They are requesting \$29,541,000 this year to perform upgrades on a short rail system in Arkansas and Louisiana.

The Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District plans to use the funds to complete rail rehabilitation that would allow trains to travel up to 25 miles per hour; to improve rail connectivity between customers and other railroads; and upgrade bridges and road crossings. This project is part of a multiyear investment in the railroad. The project is expected to benefit communities from Tallulah, Louisiana, to Southeast Arkansas. The targeted short rail is connected to the Ports of Lake Providence and Madison on the Mississippi River in Louisiana.

I appreciate the department's consideration of this application. I ask that you please keep my office informed on the progress of this proposal as well as when a final decision has been made regarding this grant. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michael Eby in my Baton Rouge Office at (225) 929-7711.

Sincerely,



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

BC/ME

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