STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

DOUGLAS A. DUCEY
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

January 8, 2020

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590-001

Re: Tonto Creek Bridge, Gila County Arizona

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing regarding an important Arizona transportation infrastructure need outside of the state highway system.

Gila County is home to the Tonto Basin and its 1,500-resident-community north of Roosevelt Lake. The community is divided by Tonto Creek, a waterbed that when flooded, strands homes on the creek's east side from schools, medical care, and amenities on the west. High-waters closed the only roads across Tonto Creek for 75 days in 2017.

Residents need a bridge over Tonto Creek for basic safety and quality of life needs. Since 1995, eight people have died while attempting to cross in their vehicles during high-water times; three children lost their lives while crossing in a vehicle the day after Thanksgiving less than two months ago.

Gila County has applied for several federal grants for the project, including a Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant, but were denied. The most recent denial came just weeks before the latest tragedy.

I was encouraged to see that the Federal FY 2020 spending bills signed by President Trump in December included $1 billion for the BUILD Grant program. The proposed Tonto Creek Bridge is an excellent candidate. The bridge would significantly increase safety, improve quality of life, and bolster economic competitiveness in the Tonto Basin.

The Tonto Creek Bridge has my highest recommendation for BUILD Grant funding, and I urge your support for this project. The Arizona Department of Transportation stands ready to provide technical review and assistance to Gila County through its BUILD Grant application. I look forward to offering my continued support. Thank you for your partnership with local and state governments to make these critical transportation improvements possible.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Ducey
Governor
State of Arizona

1700 WEST WASHINGTON STREET, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007
602-542-4331 • www.azgovernor.gov