

# United States Senate

July 18, 2018

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

Dear Secretary Chao,

As you know, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grants program funds projects that will improve the infrastructure in American communities. In particular, Alaskans face unique transportation challenges that contribute to economic disparity. To offset this burden, the BUILD grant program plays an integral role in rebuilding infrastructure and ultimately economies. I am writing in support of the City of Emmonak's application to the 2018 BUILD Program.

The proposed project is a durable investment in port and barge landing infrastructure and road structure that would directly improve quality of life, health, and safety of local residents in the lower Yukon River Delta. For more than ten years, the City of Emmonak, along with the State of Alaska and the Alaska Congressional delegation, has worked to advance this project. The project is reportedly primed to allow construction to begin within a short time frame. It is my understanding that engineering and design is complete, construction permits are in-hand and \$3.0 million of construction materials are on-site. The BUILD application provides a pathway for completion of this vital infrastructure project.

The City of Emmonak serves as a regional hub not only for its 900 residents, but for another 13 villages in the lower Yukon River region with a combined population of over 8,200 people. The region is within the Kusilvak Census Area and currently, over 20% of residents are considered persons in poverty. With no interconnecting roads between communities, a completed port structure is critical for the local economy, especially during the summer shipping season. The roads that do exist within the city, however, are unpaved and vehicles contribute to airborne dust that negatively impacts health, road safety, and quality of life.

I am honored to represent all Alaskans, and I ask that you give all due consideration to any Alaskan organization being considered for these grants. Thank you for considering funding this project, and I ask that you consider it consistent with the policies and procedures of your agency.

Sincerely,



Dan Sullivan  
United States Senator