

April 2, 2020

Railroad Board and Railroad Authority
Office of Air, Rail and Transit
South Dakota Department of Transportation
700 East Broadway Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

RE: SD Rail Board Letter of Support for the Sisseton Milbank Railroad 2020 BUILD Grant

Dear Chairman Cope and SD Rail Board members:

We would like to respectfully request that the South Dakota Rail Board issue a letter of support for the Sisseton Milbank Railroad's federal 2020 BUILD grant.

The Sisseton Milbank Railroad (SMRR) is in dire need to be upgraded from its 1880's vintage light weight rails to today's larger weight rails to enable investment by the communities the SMRR serves in Roberts and Grant counties in northeast South Dakota. The SMRR's 2019 BUILD grant request, sponsored by SD DOT was not awarded. The US DOT held a conference call in late January to discuss with the SMRR suggestions on improving the BUILD grant request for a 2020 application. Those improvements in the grant request are still being finalized, so I am providing a copy of the 2019 BUILD request.

A meeting was held at the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate's tribal headquarters on February 19 with the tribal Chair, vice Chair and the SWO's economic development people, and they expressed enthusiasm for how this infrastructure improvement could lead to several tribal led enterprises for improved economic development.

Our grant writer, Bruce Lindholm is working with the SWO to quantify the economic benefits; the final numbers will be included in the 2020 SMRR BUILD grant.

SMRR presented to the Roberts County Board on March 10 and at their March 24 meeting Roberts County agreed to be the sponsor of the 2020 SMRR BUILD grant.

We would like the South Dakota Rail Board to approve issuing a letter of support for the 2020 SMRR BUILD grant. We appreciate your consideration and I welcome any questions.

Sincerely,

Mark

Mark Wegner
President & CEO
Sisseton Milbank Railroad Company