

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 24, 2020

Honorable Ronald Batory  
Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey SE  
Washington DC 20590

Dear Administrator Batory,

We write in support of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's Consolidated Rail Infrastructure Safety and Improvement (CRISI) grant application for the Kiamichi Tri-State Freight Rail Improvement Project. This project would have an immediate and direct impact by increasing safety along existing rail lines and empowering new economic development opportunities throughout Southeastern Oklahoma.

The Kiamichi Railroad Company is a Class III short line railroad headquartered in Hugo, Oklahoma, that operates 199 track miles in Southeast Oklahoma, as well as additional track miles in Arkansas and Texas. This grant would allow the Kiamichi Railroad to undertake a broad range of improvements. Currently, ten bridges are not able to handle the industry standard 286,000 lbs. weight cars and track speeds are limited to 10mph. With this grant, the railroad would be able to upgrade these bridges, install 27 miles of new rail and turnouts, improve crossings, and put in additional crossties. These important bridge and track improvements would increase the railroad's ability to handle fully-loaded, modern freight cars and improve overall operational efficiency.

A CRISI grant would further allow Kiamichi Railroad to restore service to a portion of the Antlers subdivision that is currently inactive. Restoring service to this portion of the line would bring rail access to the town of Antlers as well as the rest of Pushmataha County. Expanded rail access would allow companies throughout the region, like Teal Jones, to expand their operations which would support economic growth and jobs across Southeastern Oklahoma.

The CRISI grant program is designed for projects like the Kiamichi Tri-State Freight Rail Improvement Project that will improve safety and empower economic development and job growth in the region. We fully support the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's application for this project. Thank you for your consideration of this important project application.

Sincerely,



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James M. Inhofe  
United States Senator



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James Lankford  
United States Senator