



P.O. Box 682  
Republic, MO 65738  
417.732.5200  
republicchamber.com

May 11, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The Republic Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to express our dedicated support for FIX I-44: Freight, Innovation and Safety for the Ozarks project. Federal funding for improvements to I-44 through Springfield, Missouri will improve freight mobility, safety, economic vitality, and community connections.

Interstate 44 is a major east-west corridor that begins in Texas, traverses through Oklahoma, and terminates on the eastern border of Missouri at St. Louis. It provides a vital freight corridor for the country and for our metro area of nearly half a million people. The average daily traffic count within the limits of the proposed segment is 51,000 vehicles, 41 percent of which are over-the-road freight haulers.

Locally, the corridor helps facilitate the movement of goods from a strong manufacturing sector with nationally significant clusters in stainless steel tank manufacturing, remanufacturing, food production, and logistics. Springfield is the third largest city in Missouri and center of an economic area comprising twenty-seven counties in southern Missouri and northern Arkansas. I-44 is a critical connection for the region to the rest of the United States.

The FIX I-44 project would add capacity and pedestrian connections, improve pavement condition, and reconfigure a major interchange at Kansas Expressway/Route 13. These critical improvements will ensure that local drivers, regional freight movement, and tourist traffic to Branson and the Ozarks can safely coexist, while improving connectivity between the north and south sides of I-44.

Republic is listed as the 11<sup>th</sup> fastest growing city in the state of Missouri. We strive to develop and maintain progressive collaboration with all community partners to promote, support, and advocate for local businesses and patrons, and support what this project would mean regionally.

We respectfully request your favorable consideration of this application for the FIX I-44 project and the resulting benefits of safety, pedestrian connectivity, reduced congestion, and improved freight mobility.

Sincerely,



Macy Mitchell - Director, Republic Area Chamber of Commerce