



April 26, 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:

On behalf of Central States Industrial Equipment & Service, Inc. (CSI), I am writing to express our dedicated support for FIX I-44: Freight, Innovation and Safety for the Ozarks project. The Missouri Department of Transportation is requesting federal funding for improvements to I-44 through Springfield, Missouri that will improve freight mobility, safety, economic vitality, and community connections.

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.

This project is important to our company for two primary reasons. First of which is employee safety. Many of our two hundred plus employees drive I-44 both to and from work. Routinely, there is congestion and accidents along the route that delay employees' commute. Additionally, our company distributes stainless steel components and manufactured equipment vital to the hygienic processing industry via common carrier and dedicated truck which heavily rely upon I-44. The processing companies CSI serves are essential in providing food, beverage, and pharmaceuticals to the North American market. We respectfully request that you award an MPDG grant to the FIX I-44 project this year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Reynolds', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Joe Reynolds
President