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COMMITTEE ON  
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March 3, 2025

The Honorable Sean Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy:

I write regarding the City of Flagstaff's application for Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) grant funding for the **Big Fill Lake: Building Resilience for Historic Flagstaff Route 66 and Rail/Freight Capacity** project.

This grant application represents a long-standing regional priority to build resilience for crucial rail service that carries millions of dollars in freight from the port of Long Beach, through Arizona's Second Congressional District, into the heart of the United States. As you may already know, Flagstaff hosts over five million visitors annually, almost 30,000 university students, and is home to scientists, academics, artists, athletes, American Indian tribes, military, and lovers of nature. Flagstaff serves as a key gateway to the Grand Canyon and other notable national parks.

Furthermore, Flagstaff sees over 70 freight trains daily and is a crucial contributor to the state and national economies. A notable part of Flagstaff along historic Route 66 (and the site of the BNSF rail line) is at risk of flooding due to lack of drainage capacity at the BNSF and Route 66 crossing of the regional Rio de Flag stream. This flooding issue is exacerbated by the increase in rain events in March and April, increasingly putting homes and undeveloped land parcels at risk.

If granted, the associated PROTECT grant would protect against future storm events and provide housing relief for both existing homes (over 50 within the FEMA floodway) and provide the opportunity for new businesses and home development. Specifically, the Big Fill Lake project will enable Northern Arizona and the Flagstaff community to:

- Save costs in emergency response related to federal surface transportation modes;
- Repair existing road infrastructure after flood events; and
- Build new infrastructure to protect the area during storm events.

I request that you give the City of Flagstaff's PROTECT grant request full and fair consideration, within applicable laws and regulations. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Eli Crane  
Member of Congress

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