

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

June 11, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing in support of OmniTRAX Holdings Combined Inc.'s (OmniTRAX) application to the Federal Railroad Administration's Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant program. OmniTRAX is seeking \$64,900,000 for the second phase of its Transportation Investments for Employment and Safety program that will benefit the Kettle Falls International Railway (KFR).

KFR is a strategic rail asset in Washington state located in Ferry County, Washington. KFR traverses some of the most impoverished counties in the state. It is an economic engine for the northeastern part of Washington, supporting millions of dollars in economic activity through dozens of railroad customers and employees in the state. It is critically important to businesses and a gateway for international trade for Eastern Washington by connecting Kettle Falls, Washington, to Grand Forks, Canada. OmniTRAX acquired the line in 2005.

If successful, OmniTRAX will use grant funding to improve and maintain railroad crosstie conditions on KFR and three other short line railroads. By binding tie replacement projects on four short line railroads into one application, OmniTRAX will maximize investment while minimizing grant administration and environmental permitting challenges. In Washington, OmniTRAX will install 24,513 ties on approximately 29.9 miles of the KFR San Poil Subdivision near Danville, Washington. The improvements will reduce the overall cost of capital; derailments; CO₂, NO_x, and PM_{2.5} emissions; maintenance expenses; and locomotive and equipment utilization.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of OmniTRAX's application to the CRISI grant program.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell

United States Senator