

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0309

January 12, 2023

The Honorable Peter P.M. Buttigieg
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We are proud to submit this letter supporting the I-10/Kortsen Traffic Interchange in Casa Grande, Arizona for a 2023 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant. This project will support job creation in the community, mitigate the need to commute to Phoenix and Tucson, and therefore limit carbon emissions.

This project will improve transportation access for newly emerging industries in south-central Arizona, including two manufacturers of clean-technology vehicles: Lucid Motors and Nikola. Lucid is operating a newly built plant in Casa Grande that can produce tens of thousands of electric cars annually, while Nikola's new plant in nearby Coolidge began producing zero-emission trucks in March 2022. Lucid and Nikola built their plants in south-central Arizona to leverage existing transportation infrastructure, including Interstates 8 and 10, convenient rail service bringing in parts from Mexico, and convenient access to Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. Improving mobility for both plants and thousands of good-paying jobs, the I-10 Kortsen Interchange is truly the Gateway to the Electric Vehicle Future.

While the proximity of Interstate Highways and railroad lines is ideal, additional help is needed to ensure that the local roadway system can handle the transportation demands that are quickly resulting from the recent and ongoing establishment of vehicle manufacturing and other new industries. Providing Interstate access at Kortsen Road will distribute traffic on the regional arterial roadway system to avoid overloading roadways that do have freeway access, specifically Florence Boulevard and McCartney Road.

Casa Grande voters in 2021 approved a Comprehensive Plan update that emphasizes the need to promote use of alternative transportation modes; therefore, the project will also add a sidewalk and bike lanes to accommodate non-motorized transportation across I-10.

The project is ready to move forward. There is strong support for this project by many levels of government and a wide variety of community stakeholders. The need for this project has been documented since 2008, and a Final Design Concept Report (DCR) was completed in 2021 in cooperation with the Arizona Department of Transportation. The Department of Transportation deemed it a Highly Recommended RAISE grant project last year, as well as a "Project of Merit" that should be resubmitted in 2023.

The I-10/Kortsen Road Traffic Interchange project will result in significant progress toward meeting local, regional, and national goals for advancing economic progress, sustainably, and equitably. In accordance with all existing agency rules, regulations, and ethical guidelines, we respectfully ask that you give this proposal full and fair consideration as you make this important funding decision.

Sincerely,

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Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Kelly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mark Kelly
United States Senator