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**BOARD OF PUEBLO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

To the Honorable  
Colorado Senate Transportation Committee  
Senator Randy Baumgardner, Chair  
State Capitol Building  
Denver, CO 80203

March 04, 2015

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Pueblo County enthusiastically supports SB15-179, and urges you to pass this important legislation. US Highway 50 is a transportation corridor vital to Colorado's economy and citizens. As traffic congestion continues to grow and become a significant problem on Interstate 70, Highway 50 is the only viable alternative route to traverse Colorado from Kansas to Utah. The Denver Metro Chamber & North Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation found that Colorado conservatively loses \$839 Million each year, due to congestion along I-70 between Denver and Grand Junction. We believe improving Highway 50 will stop this economic loss, and bring new money and prosperity to our State.

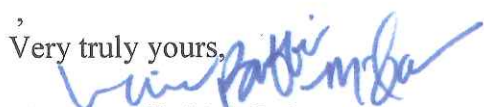
Colorado's citizens and the trucking industry need additional options to cross the Rocky Mountains, particularly when Interstate 70 is impassable or overburdened with traffic. However, Highway 50 is largely a two-lane road with limited capacity, limiting its current use. We believe further study is necessary to evaluate the potential economic gain that Colorado could realize by improving Highway 50, opening an alternative east-west transportation corridor through our State.

Highway 50 is the life blood to hundreds of Colorado communities, and is already being improved in many areas to accommodate higher traffic volumes. However, to our knowledge, CDOT has never been afforded opportunity to formally evaluate the benefits of improving Highway 50 from border to border. We believe such evaluation is critical, allowing CDOT to quantify the statewide economic gain of an improved Highway 50. Understanding the economic growth potential is vital to developing a long-term strategy that balances revenues and expenses in expanding a highway corridor.

It is not Pueblo County's intent to place increased burden on the State of Colorado. Therefore, to conduct this study, we will coordinate with and raise funds from our numerous partner agencies along Highway 50. We have already secured commitment from several cities and counties, and are excited to work with CDOT and their consultants to conduct this important study.

Therefore, we encourage you to pass SB15-179, allowing this important study to be conducted.

Very truly yours,

  
Liane "Buffie" McFadyen  
Chair, Pueblo County Board of Commissioners

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