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TO: Chairman Kunze, VC Reineke, Ranking Minority Member Antonio
Transportation Committee Members

FROM: Scott C. Coleman, P.E., P.S.

DATE: March 19, 2021

RE: **Sub HB 74, Transportation Budget**

FORCE ACCOUNT limits increase - SUPPORT

County: Logan

Budget: \$ 6.8 million

I am writing to express my support for Sub. House Bill 74, the Transportation Budget, particularly the addition of the language increasing county and other local government force account limits.

Since the force account limits for projects that we can construct with our own staff were increased in 2003, construction material costs have increased between 44 and 220 percent or more. Considering the increased construction costs these limits should be increased to \$300,000 for bridges and \$150,000 for roads with an annual inflation factor.

In Logan County, we do not have local contractors to bid on our bridge projects. We can barely get contractors to participate in bids on large federally funded bridge projects in our county.

1) Without an increase in force account limits, smaller bridges in Logan County may not be able to be replaced. This would have a catastrophic impact on our economy. We have had only one bidder, Shelly Company, on paving bids since 2001.

2) Our bridge crew does excellent work and completes projects within a few weeks rather than months. They work closely with adjacent landowners to complete a project that the entire

community is proud of. We could not achieve the same quality and economy with having no local bridge contractors.

3) Jobs will be maintained because we have no local bridge contractors and Shelly Company performs nearly \$2 million in paving contracts with us annually. If force accounts are not increased, we would have to shift funding from paving to bridges and there would be no net increase in contracted work.

4) This allows the contractors to build the intermediate and larger projects while we focus on the smaller ones that they have trouble bidding on.

5) The taxpayers save money because we are very efficient at building small bridges and maintaining roads. Shelly Company has been efficient at highway resurfacing in our county.

Sincerely,

Scott C. Coleman, P.E., P.S.
Logan County Engineer