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May 7, 2024

The Honorable Lauren Boebert
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Support for Cottonwood Pass – Blue Hill Safety Improvements

Dear Representative Boebert:

As Eagle County Government, I write to express my strong support for FY2025 Community Project Funding for the Cottonwood Pass – Blue Hill Safety Improvements Project (the Project). The improvements of this project, especially combined with its subsequent phases, will advance regional and statewide resiliency, mobility, and connectivity to and through rural communities along Interstate 70 (I-70) and Western Colorado.

I-70 is the only contiguous east/west route in Colorado, serving as the gateway to Colorado's thriving outdoor recreation industry on the Western Slope; it is also a Critical Freight Corridor that supports significant statewide and national economic growth. Glenwood Canyon, a nationally-renowned scenic mountain feature along the I-70 corridor, experiences extreme weather and natural disaster events like rockslides, frozen roads, flash floods, and even wildfires, that often close the corridor and reroute travelers hundreds of miles and several hours.

While not a designated or endorsed detour, Cottonwood Pass is used by travelers during Canyon closures because of the shorter travel times it provides compared to the official detours. Cottonwood Pass is an unpaved, largely residential route that does not have the capacity to accommodate the traffic volumes from I-70. To improve the safety and mobility of the road for local residents, region visitors, and the occasional detour traffic, Eagle County, in partnership with CDOT and other local partners, will implement safety improvements along Cottonwood Pass, specifically the area known as Blue Hill as it relates to this grant request.

Cottonwood Pass safety and mobility improvements include curve softening, enhanced sight distance, and increased road width in specific areas to accommodate two vehicles passing.

We appreciate your consideration and respectfully request funding to support this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,

Jeff Shroll
County Manager