

January 30, 2023

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

Subject: Letter of Support – Bayfield County Wisconsin application for Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) funding

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

It is with great enthusiasm that NorthLakes Community Clinic (NLCC) submits this letter of support for Bayfield County Wisconsin's application for a RAISE grant to help fund critical infrastructure needs. As a federally funded FQHC that serves the most rurally isolated populations in Wisconsin, we recognize the barriers to transportation and infrastructure in our region. We operate two rural clinics within Bayfield County that offer a wide range of services to patients from Bayfield County as well as surrounding counties. Bayfield County is geographically the second-largest county in Wisconsin and forests, waterways, and wetlands populate the generally desolate stretches of space between residents and health care services throughout the county. Bayfield County's project will enhance safety by creating alternate routes for travel in the event of extreme weather events, such as those that have completely wiped out sections of US Highway 2 between Iron River and Ashland.

Recent RAISE projects in the county have improved geographic access for the people who seek the services at our clinics and have strengthened the county's rural communities. The RAISE program's goals to improve transportation infrastructure in our communities align with the NorthLakes goals of improving access to care. Transportation is one of the top barriers rural residents face in accessing critical healthcare services. The proposed transportation improvements in this application will provide alternate routes for more people and promote additional rural economic growth in Bayfield County. Thank you for your consideration and approval of this application.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Rice, CEO
NorthLakes Community Clinic