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May 21, 2024

The Honorable Amit Bose, Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: **Watco's 2023/2024 CRISI Grant Program Application: "Strategic Bridge Improvement and Sustainability Project"**

Dear Administrator Bose;

On behalf of Compass Minerals, I want to extend my full support for Watco's 2023/2024 CRISI Grant Application - *Strategic Bridge Improvement and Sustainability Project*. This project proposes to complete at least 30% preliminary engineering and design work, including all environmental work, for 116 strategic railroad bridges that traverse waterways across the entire Watco network. These bridges are critical to safe and efficient railroad service to our facility(s).

Compass Minerals has an international footprint with nearly 2,000 employees. Our 8 production facilities look to ship via rail as one of our first options; that option must be cost effective, timely, and most importantly safe. Both our Salt and Fertilizer divisions rely heavily on rail to meet customer needs and fully support initiatives to maximize rail transportation.

Further weight restrictions and/or rail service disruptions due to the condition of the bridge(s) that serve our facility(s) would severely impact the economics of our business model and would result in more truck traffic navigating local roads through business, commercial and residential areas to reach our plant. I understand Watco is applying for a federal CRISI grant of \$15.2M and will be providing a local match of \$3.8M if awarded. I applaud Watco for taking this big step forward in trying to address its' infrastructure challenges today and in the future.

Compass Minerals supports modern infrastructure that helps our economy grow and enhances the safety of the communities we call home, and certainly supports this CRISI grant application.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Brownell", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jeff Brownell

Senior Manager Logistics