

TO: Office of the Secretary of Transportation

FROM: Craig Smith, Division of Operations Director, the South Dakota Department of Transportation

RE: Docket No. FHWA-2026-0265 — Agency Information Collection Activities: Request for Comments for a New Information Collection

The South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) respectfully submits the following comments regarding the Federal Highway Administration's publication, DOT at 91 Fed. Reg. 1283 (March 13, 2026). We are committed to supporting effective implementation while advocating for practical approaches that minimize unnecessary burdens on state agencies.

Clarification of Applicability

We recommend that the proposed data collection requirements explicitly apply only to State DOTs that apply for and are awarded funding under this program. As written, the proposed data collection might be construed and applied to all State DOTs, regardless of participation. Imposing reporting requirements on agencies that neither apply for nor receive funding would create unnecessary administrative burden without corresponding federal support.

Regarding Reporting Burden

We suggest that the proposed quarterly reporting requirements be revised to a semi-annual reporting schedule. Given the level of detail requested, quarterly reporting would be resource-intensive and may not yield meaningful additional insight compared to less frequent reporting.

Operational Limitations Affecting Data Accuracy

Several of the proposed data elements present practical challenges that may limit the accuracy and feasibility of reporting. Specifically:

- Tracking individuals for up to six months after hire would be difficult and time-consuming, particularly when individuals are no longer directly connected to DOT-administered projects.

- Collection of median wage data may not be feasible unless individuals are working on projects subject to certified payroll requirements. Otherwise, this would require requesting sensitive compensation data from contractors, which may be difficult to obtain and verify.

Conclusion

The proposed data collection places a significant burden on State DOTs to obtain information from contractors, including firms that may not have employees actively working on DOT-funded projects at the time of reporting. Collecting, verifying, and maintaining this information would be administratively challenging and could result in inconsistent or incomplete data.

More broadly, we note that no current funding opportunity appears to be available for this program. Establishing extensive reporting requirements in the absence of active grant funding raises concerns regarding the necessity and timing of this data collection effort.

For these reasons, we encourage FHWA to clarify applicability, reduce reporting frequency, and reconsider data elements that are difficult to obtain or verify. The SDDOT thanks USDOT for considering these comments.

Sincerely,



Craig Smith
Division of Operations Director
South Dakota Department of Transportation