

February 1, 2012



Hon. John L. Mica, Chairman
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Nick J. Rahall II, Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. John J. Duncan Jr., Chairman
Subcommittee on Highways & Transit
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Peter A. DeFazio, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Highways & Transit
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Mica, Ranking Member Rahall, Chairman Duncan, and Ranking Member DeFazio:

The American Highway Users Alliance is pleased to support the transportation titles of H.R. 7 due to be marked-up tomorrow by the Committee. Our hope is that the Committee title will be approved in a bipartisan fashion following a full and open debate on amendments. It is critical that we move forward with bills in both the House and Senate so that a conference committee can convene as soon as possible. As you know, SAFETEA-LU expired 854 days ago, the current extension expires March 31st, and long-term planning has been disrupted amidst funding and policy uncertainties. An authorization bill is way overdue.

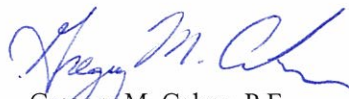
The American Highway Users Alliance greatly appreciates your efforts and the hard work of your staff to prioritize safety on all public roads, improve mobility on the National Highway System, and streamline federal interagency reviews. These priorities, along with the consolidation of smaller programs, increased flexibility for the States, and the elimination of legislative and administrative earmarks will increase public trust and support for federal transportation programs. We believe these programmatic reforms are critical prerequisites for long-term public support from highway users of the federal user fees that fund highway programs.

We are urging your colleagues to support the bill through the Committee mark-up and beyond. Among the many sections we support, we would like to highlight the following important provisions, which deserve high praise:

- ◆ Funding priority given to the National Hwy. System (including the Interstates) that serves interstate commerce and tourism
- ◆ Funding increases for the highly effective, life-saving Highway Safety Improvement Program
- ◆ Streamlining reforms that move projects through the federal government bureaucracy more quickly
- ◆ Elimination of both legislative and administrative earmarks
- ◆ Consolidation of programs to give the States more flexibility in programming
- ◆ Creation of the alternative transportation account that reduces financial pressure on the underfunded highway account of the Highway Trust Fund
- ◆ A strong, competitive research title

Finally, we look forward to continuing our work with you and your staff as H.R. 7 moves forward. We thank you for the high level of access you and your staff have given as the bill was being developed. We hope to work closely with you to offer comments on any potential amendments developed between now and enactment. As always, our member organizations and staff are here to help in any way we can.

Sincerely,


Gregory M. Cohen, P.E.
President and CEO

Cc: All Members of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee