

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1303

November 1, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eric Cantor
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader Cantor:

The intolerably high level of unemployment that continues to afflict our nation is prompting new calls for action in Washington. If Congress is going to act on any proposal to spur job creation it will have to have bipartisan support and fill a clear need that Americans understand. That is why I write to strongly encourage you to make passage of a robust multi-year surface transportation bill a top priority for the House of Representatives.

As you are well aware, the last long-term transportation authorization, SAFETEA-LU, expired more than two years ago, on September 30, 2009, and the eighth short-term extension expires March 31, 2012. Passage of a robust multi-year bill will quickly put people to work and boost long-term economic growth by filling the indisputable need to invest in our outdated and increasingly inefficient transportation infrastructure. Action on this legislation continues to have strong support from business and labor – from the President and CEO of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to the President of the AFL-CIO – and from Americans all across our nation. The billions of hours of delays that individuals and businesses experience on our nation's transportation system are bad enough. But the worst bottleneck in America right now is Washington. It's time to end the gridlock on Capitol Hill and get our economy moving again. Congress and the President must act now.

Transportation is the lifeblood of our economy. The Federal Highway Administration estimates that \$1 billion of transportation investment means almost 28,000 jobs. Such investment has a positive impact in every congressional district, which is one reason why transportation has always been a non-partisan issue. The last three surface transportation bills – ISTEA, TEA-21, and SAFETEA-LU – passed the House with overwhelming majorities.

Two and a half years ago, I called on Congress to reauthorize SAFETEA-LU, believing that as a regularly scheduled piece of bipartisan legislation, a transportation reauthorization was a particularly effective way to help revive our struggling economy. With job growth having slowed in recent months, a 16 percent unemployment rate in the construction industry, and the need for \$1.3 trillion in funding to bring our surface

transportation infrastructure up to a state of good repair, we cannot wait to pass a new bill. We can no longer afford short-term extensions that do not provide the certainty needed to undertake major projects nor the confidence needed to boost the economy. But we also cannot settle for a long-term bill that locks in funding that is inadequate to provide the investments we need for a world-class transportation system that fuels economic growth.

I know that you will agree that if we are to provide significant funding for transportation, we must do so in a fiscally responsible manner. That will likely require some innovative approaches and a willingness by both sides to compromise. I, for one, stand ready to work across the aisle and to consider new options that would help us overcome the gridlock that has thus far prevented passage of a multi-year transportation reauthorization.

Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle and the President, including in his most recent address to Congress, have agreed that investing in transportation infrastructure is money well spent. Given the current economic climate and opportunity, I strongly encourage you to prioritize and schedule consideration of a robust multi-year surface transportation bill.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



DANIEL LIPINSKI
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Leader
The Honorable Steny Hoyer, Democratic Whip
The Honorable John Mica, Chairman, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
The Honorable Nick Rahall, Ranking Member, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
The Honorable James Duncan, Jr., Chairman, Highways and Transit Subcommittee
The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Ranking Member, Highways and Transit Subcommittee