

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3218

February 10, 2015

The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
2136 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member DeFazio and Ranking Member Norton:

I write to thank you for your continued efforts on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to achieve a long-term surface transportation bill. As you know, the importance of a reliable and long-term source of transportation funding for states cannot be overstated. This is especially true in my Hudson Valley district, the home of multiple intercity passenger rail lines, the intersection of two major Interstate highways, a major freight rail line, and the joint civil-military airport Stewart International Airport. I would also like to thank you for your continued efforts to address the priorities of Members on the Committee in drafting this important piece of legislation. I appreciate this opportunity to highlight a few of the priorities in this upcoming surface transportation reauthorization that are of particular interest to my constituents.

As you know, the Hudson Valley in New York has been the site of several horrific and tragic passenger rail accidents. I believe the Committee must work to address this issue in the surface transportation reauthorization by including a rail safety title, particularly one that includes robust funding for the Railway-Highways Crossing Program, or the Section 130 program. Our Committee has a responsibility to continue improving the rail safety infrastructure, particularly in areas of high risk such as intersections with motorists.

Another priority for our Committee must be to continue to encourage the greater use of public-private partnerships (P3s) in the development, construction, and operation of our nation's infrastructure. Ranking Member Norton and I had the pleasure of serving on the Public-Private Partnership (P3) Panel of the Committee last Congress where we saw the important role P3s can play in improving our infrastructure. While P3s cannot be a substitute for the Highway Trust Fund and a robust source of federal financing, the P3 Panel identified numerous bipartisan actions that could be taken in this upcoming highway bill to add this important tool to our infrastructure tool box. Of particular importance is the establishment of a Transportation Procurement Office within the Department of Transportation to assist states in pursuing and utilizing P3s.

A strong federal investment in some of the most important corridors of our National Highway System is of utmost importance to New York. My district is home to one such corridor: New York State Route 17 (future I-86). Given the importance of this particular highway to our region and the

nation's most populous city, it was designated as Congressional High Priority Corridor. I would urge the Committee to authorize additional funding for this program and include language that I have been working on since the 113th Congress to increase the Federal cost-share to up to 95 percent.

Finally, I would encourage the Committee to address the disparity in the tax treatment of parking and transit portions of the Commuter Benefit. Many of the residents of the Hudson Valley rely heavily on passenger rail to commute to and from work every day and have depended on the use of pre-tax dollars to assist them in paying for that commute. In addition to helping commuters and employers, this important benefit is also advantageous for our transportation budgets. However, the limit on the transit portion of this benefit was reduced substantially on January 1st of this year. I am currently working on legislation with Rep. Peter King to restore this benefit and bring it to parity with the parking portion of the benefit. I would strongly encourage the Committee to include this language in any tax provisions of the surface transportation reauthorization.

I thank you again for your leadership and your commitment to crafting a strong surface transportation bill and look forward to working with you on these issues in the coming year. If you require additional information on these priorities please contact Ryan Lehman on my staff at 202-225-5441, or by email at ryan.lehman@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress