

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 18, 2015

The Honorable James M. Inhofe
Chairman
Senate Committee on Environment
and Public Works
205 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Thune
Chairman
Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation
511 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Orrin G. Hatch
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
104 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Cornyn
517 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Deb Fischer
454 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment
and Public Works
112 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science, and Transportation
716 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Banking,
Housing, and Urban Affairs
713 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Finance
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dick Durbin
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Conferees:

As you begin conference negotiations to reconcile House and Senate proposals for a multi-year surface transportation reauthorization bill, we urge you to consider the urgent need for an increase in infrastructure investment around the country, and report a final proposal that can best address these needs by maximizing annual investment levels for all surface transportation programs over a shorter authorization period.

Both the House and Senate versions of the legislation contain numerous policy reforms that will help to address America's infrastructure challenges. However, no set of policy reforms can substitute for what is truly needed to make significant progress toward rebuilding and modernizing our nation's infrastructure: funding.

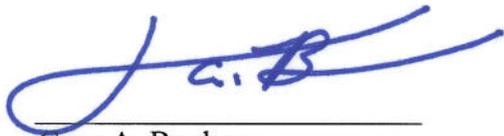
Over the past 20 years, total federal, state, and local investment in transportation has fallen as a share of GDP, while population, congestion, and maintenance backlogs have increased. In fact, America's investment in transportation as a share of GDP is at its lowest point in decades, falling more than 50 percent since 1962. Sixty-five percent of America's major roads are rated in less than good condition, one in four bridges require significant repair or cannot handle today's traffic, and forty five percent of Americans lack access to transit.

The impact of underinvestment on American businesses and families is real. The average driver spends 42 hours in traffic each year – the equivalent of an entire workweek, while burning through 2.9 billion gallons of gasoline. The poor conditions of our roadways increases auto repair and maintenance costs by over \$500 per vehicle. American businesses pay \$27 billion a year in extra freight transportation costs, increasing shipping delays and raising prices on everyday products. Despite record ridership levels, on-time performance of many passenger rail routes continues to decline due to lack of federal investment, causing frequent delays for millions of passengers. Our crumbling infrastructure is also a serious safety concern. Poor roadway conditions were a significant factor in approximately one-third of the more than 33,000 traffic fatalities last year.

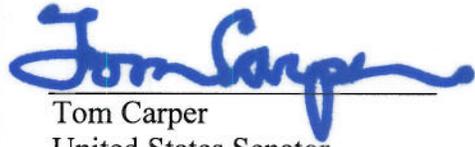
As others have pointed out, prior to MAP-21, each successive transportation package contained significant increases in annual funding levels. While the proposed Senate investment levels exceed baseline funding, they would still only be sufficient to cover expected increases in construction materials costs. These funding levels are certainly insufficient to rebuild and modernize our nation's transportation infrastructure.

With all this in mind, we strongly urge you to finalize a surface transportation conference report that can provide the maximum amount of benefits to American families and businesses by prioritizing increased investment for all surface transportation programs over the length of the authorization.

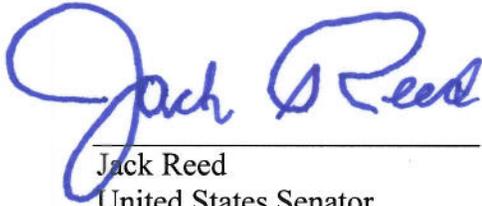
Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Tom Carper
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



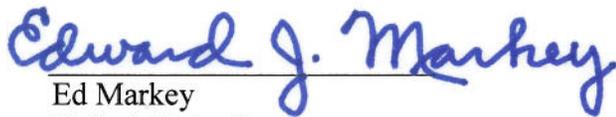
Al Franken
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



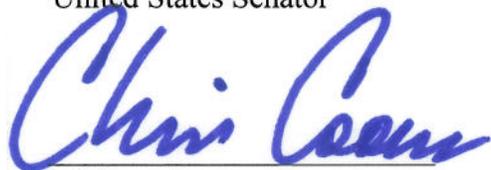
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



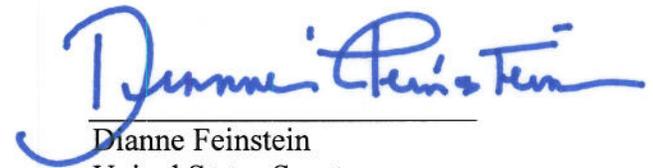
Ed Markey
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



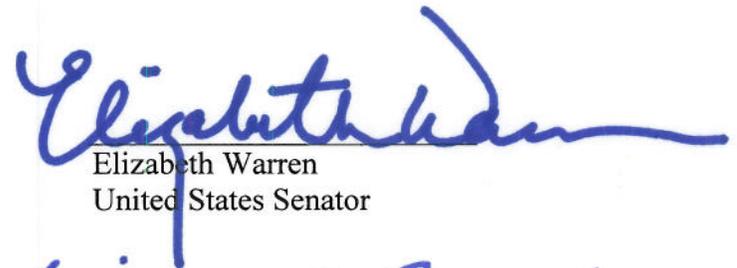
Chris Coons
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Michael Bennet
United States Senator

Kirsten Gillibrand

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Mark R Warner

Mark Warner
United States Senator

Amy Klobuchar

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

Bob Casey, Jr.

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

Tom Udall

Tom Udall
United States Senator

Jeffrey A. Merkley

Jeff Merkley
United States Senator

Joe Manchin III

Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

Debbie Stabenow

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

Ben Cardin

Ben Cardin
United States Senator

Chris Murphy

Chris Murphy
United States Senator

Angus S. King, Jr.

Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

Gary C. Peters

Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

Tim Kaine

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

Brian Schatz

Brian Schatz
United States Senator

Barbara A. Mikulski

Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator

Cc: The Honorable Harry Reid
The Honorable Mitch McConnell