

# FasterBetterSafer



AMERICANS FOR TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY



**TRANSPORTATION**  
**CONSTRUCTION**  
**COALITION**

July 12, 2011

To President Obama and Members of Congress:

As representatives of business, labor, highway and public transportation interests, the Americans for Transportation Mobility Coalition (ATM) and the Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC) strongly urge you to make the future funding and certainty of the federal transportation programs a focal point of ongoing debt limit and deficit reduction negotiations.

Given the macroeconomic benefits of transportation investment, and the overwhelming needs that have been identified by two blue ribbon commissions and many organizations across the country, there is no doubt that significant transportation investments provided in a multi-year surface transportation bill would have a positive impact on the U.S. economy. Unlike many other government spending programs, federal highway and public transportation investments produce tangible assets that contribute directly to economic growth.

The ATM and TCC acknowledge the challenges of the current fiscal environment and do not consider current highway and public transportation programs above the need for rigorous examination and reform. In fact, as a core federal responsibility, we believe that the time for a thoughtful debate over the direction of the programs is long overdue.

Unfortunately, this debate has not moved forward in nearly two years due to the inability of the Congress and the Administration to address the financial challenges confronting the Highway Trust Fund. Without identifying a way to stabilize federal transportation funding mechanisms, the next multi-year reauthorization will include draconian cuts of as much as one-third of federal highway, transit and safety investments, which would accelerate the deteriorating performance of the nation's surface transportation network and greatly undermine U.S. economic growth and competitiveness. Furthermore, a reduction of this magnitude is estimated to result in the loss of more than 600,000 jobs.

As transportation improvements impact the health of both the nation's economy and the federal government's fiscal outlook, we urge Congress and the Administration to work, at a minimum, to preserve existing levels of highway and public transportation investment and, preferably, develop a reliable revenue model to enable future investment levels that help meet the nation's surface transportation needs. The current debt limit and deficit reduction negotiations are an important opportunity to address both of these critical issues. This is not an

unprecedented concept, a bipartisan majority of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform recognized the impact transportation investments have on the economy by voting in favor of a proposal to increase trust fund revenue to support vital transportation infrastructure investments.

A long-term sustainable surface transportation program is central to our nation's economic growth and competitiveness. The ATM and TCC request that the President and Members of Congress make providing resources to sustain, and ideally increase, highway and public transportation investment part of the deficit reduction and debt limit solution.

Sincerely,

Americans for Transportation Mobility  
Transportation Construction Coalition