

May 11, 2012

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chair
Committee on Environment &
Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable James Inhofe
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment &
Public Works
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Boxer and Senator Inhofe,

As a broad coalition of energy efficiency and environmental organizations, small and large businesses, and public interest and faith based groups, we urge you to include certain provisions from the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act (S. 1813) in the final conference version of the bill that would reauthorize the nation's transportation programs.

The transportation sector consumes roughly 28 percent of all end-use energy in the United States.¹ According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, highway vehicle miles traveled (VMT) are projected to grow 60 percent by 2030.² Furthermore, highway vehicle travel accounts for 81 percent of American transportation energy consumption. Different transportation modes and better coordination of transportation and land use planning will be essential to address the escalating VMT rate and the national economic, environmental and security problems associated with increased energy use.

Updating and reforming our country's transportation programs would take important steps to advance policies that would make our transportation system more efficient. While we recognize the challenges associated with the reauthorization process, it is imperative that America possess a transportation system that utilizes less energy, decreases our dependence on oil, spurs economic growth, reduces pollution and promotes transportation choices that will enhance mobility and access for all.

Toward that end, a long-term reauthorization measure would fund highway programs, add mechanisms for performance measurements and accelerate project delivery. As you continue your conference deliberations, we ask that the following energy efficiency provisions in MAP-21 be retained:

- Require states to establish performance targets for roads and bridges under the National Highway Performance Program that incorporate traffic monitoring and infrastructure-based intelligent systems to identify needs and areas for improvement to provide greater mobility, lower costs and reduce impacts on the environment (Section 1106);

¹ U.S. Energy Information Administration. Annual Energy Review 2010.
http://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/annual/pdf/sec2_3.pdf

² U.S. Department of Transportation – Research and Innovative Technology Administration. Transportation Vision 2030, 2008. http://www.rita.dot.gov/publications/transportation_vision_2030/html/passenger_transportation.html.

- Maintain the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program to help reduce emissions and improve the flow of traffic by promoting carpooling and other substitutes on congested roads (Section 1113);
- Replace the existing Surface Transportation Program with the Transportation Mobility Program, which would afford states and regions the flexibility to invest in a broad set of multi-modal transit and planning options – including bicycle and pedestrian projects and travel demand management activities (Section 1108);
- Call upon the U.S. Department of Transportation to create a primary freight network and an accompanying monitoring plan to generate additional freight transport capacity and improve service (Section 1115); and
- Restore tax-free transit benefits for commuters to encourage use of alternative options for commuters that ease congestion and pollution, and to restore equity with parking benefits (Section 40204).

Importantly, enactment of an enduring reauthorization bill could create or sustain nearly 3 million domestic jobs, in part by investing in clean transportation options and updated traffic management technologies, and repair our present infrastructure. It would also reduce fuel use and save consumers money via public transit and intelligent system programs.

To further increase energy efficiencies in the transportation sector and provide Americans with access to clean, affordable transportation choices such as public transit, biking and walking, it is critically important that the aforementioned sections of S. 1813 be incorporated into the conference report to ensure adequate investments are made in such programs and our transportation system is not mired in the past.

We thank you in advance for your consideration of this request and look forward to working with you to strengthen our country's transportation infrastructure by enacting a reauthorization for the 21st century.

Sincerely,

Alliance to Save Energy
 Alliance to Save Energy
 Environmental and Energy Study Institute
 National Association of Energy Service Companies
 Natural Resources Defense Council
 Transportation Choices Coalition

Cc: The Honorable Max Baucus
 The Honorable John Rockefeller
 The Honorable Richard Durbin
 The Honorable Tim Johnson
 The Honorable Charles Schumer
 The Honorable Bill Nelson
 The Honorable Robert Menendez
 The Honorable David Vitter
 The Honorable Orrin Hatch

The Honorable Richard Shelby
The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison
The Honorable John Hoeven