

August 31, 2015

The Honorable Bill Shuster  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation and  
Infrastructure  
United States House of Representatives  
2251 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Pete DeFazio  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation and  
Infrastructure  
United States House of Representatives  
2164 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
United States House of Representatives  
1102 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sander Levin  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Ways and Means  
United States House of Representatives  
1106 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member DeFazio, Chairman Ryan and Ranking Member Levin:

The Coalition of Northeastern Governors (CONEG) urges Congress to act expeditiously to ensure continuity and stability of the nation's highway, transit, rail and safety programs and the Highway Trust Fund through which many of these critical programs are funded. With the current authorization of federal surface transportation programs set to expire October 29, 2015, we strongly encourage the House and Senate to enact a fully-funded, multi-year authorization bill that includes a sustainable revenue stream dedicated to the Highway Trust Fund.

Our states make major investments in the surface transportation networks that link communities, states, regions, and the nation. From the roads, bridges, and transit stations that connect people to workplaces, services, and schools to the port, rail, and highway corridors that connect freight to markets, the investment in infrastructure drives growth, development, and creation of jobs across multiple economic sectors. Infrastructure provides the backbone of both the northeastern and national economies, and a robust, sustained federal commitment to infrastructure investment is essential for economic opportunity and overall quality of life for citizens. Therefore, federal dollars are critical to ensure on-going maintenance, preservation and investment in the components of the national transportation system. A fully-funded, multi-year authorization can provide the assurance of future year funds and the stability needed to build the nation's workforce and leverage other resources necessary to efficiently execute capital programs that transcend multiple fiscal years.

We recognize that Congress must address a number of other critical national issues in the coming months, in addition to the challenges faced in drafting a long-term transportation measure. The President and the Senate have advanced strong proposals, and all parties in both Houses of

Congress and the Administration now face the challenge of finding a bipartisan solution to sustain programs that affect the economic vitality of every corner of America. We strongly urge on-going negotiations to develop a long-term, fully-funded surface transportation authorization bill that will ensure the federal government remains a consistent funding partner. The necessary revenue stream should ensure a sustainable Highway Trust Fund, and also maintain the current federal commitment to the nation's highway and transit capital programs. New initiatives should be funded with new revenues so that continued investment in core infrastructure needs is assured.

As the negotiations intensify, the CONEG governors urge a solution that adheres to the following principles for surface transportation programs:

- Safety is a fundamental cornerstone of regional and national transportation systems. Efforts to improve safety and security on the nation's highway, transit, and rail systems must continue.
- The federal government must remain a strong and consistent partner in transportation funding with the states, with predictable, annual federal transportation funding to ensure the effective planning and implementation of all transportation programs.
- Future revenues for the Highway Trust Fund must be sufficient to meet future needs. A contemporary and sustainable mechanism for the Highway Trust Fund is urgently required to finance the maintenance and expansion of America's vital transportation infrastructure.
- As an integral part of the national transportation system, transit must continue to receive sustained, assured federal funding levels.
- An effective connection among intermodal networks is essential to the efficient movement of people and goods, particularly in the Northeast. Federal policies and programs should support efficient intermodal connections that improve reliability, provide modal redundancy, enhance security, reduce travel times, and contribute to increased productivity.
- A national, comprehensive rail policy that provides a coherent institutional framework and adequate funding is essential and would make the nation's rail system – intercity, commuter, freight and their intermodal links – a stronger component of a balanced, energy-efficient and environmentally-sound multi-modal transportation system.
- The federal government should continue to support discretionary programs and investments which result in innovation and encourage livable communities and modal balance.
- The federal government, in partnership with the states, should continue to simplify and streamline federal transportation programs and permitting processes, consistent with the important goals of environmental stewardship, program accountability and performance.
- Federal support and investment are pivotal to state and regional deployment of transportation research and technologies that improve safety, security, efficiency, and capacity; help manage congestion; and contribute to economic development and trade. Federal resources should continue to be directed towards these important efforts.
- Private sector investment can be an important supplement to the future effectiveness and expansion of the nation's transportation system. Innovative financing programs, such as the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA), the Railroad

Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) program, and State Infrastructure Banks (SIBs), should be more attractive to encourage their effective use by states and the private sector through maximum flexibility to allow the use of conventional and innovative funding tools.

- States should be able to capture value that results from public transportation infrastructure investment. Federal legislation should not interfere with the states' flexibility to toll, and tolling pilot programs should be expanded and incorporate specific performance requirements.

By acting expeditiously on surface transportation legislation, the Congress can assure that federal, state and private sector investments will continue to address immediate transportation needs; help maintain the full range of national economic activity that depends upon the transportation sector; and lay the foundation for longer term improvements and an efficient, effective transportation system that moves people and goods in a competitive national and global economy.

Sincerely,

/o.s./

Dannel P. Malloy  
Governor of Connecticut  
CONEG Chair and Lead  
Governor for Transportation

/o.s./

Charles D. Baker  
Governor of Massachusetts  
CONEG Vice-Chair

*Identical letters were also sent to the Senate EPW, Banking, Commerce, and Finance Committees.*