

Dear Senator Boxer:

We applaud your efforts to develop a new long-term surface transportation bill to fund our nation's infrastructure priorities for the next six years. As you know, smart investment in infrastructure is the key to improving our economy, protecting the environment and putting Californians back to work.

However, we are increasingly concerned that the transportation bill being drafted in the U.S. House of Representatives will embrace a so-called "back to basics" approach, eliminating key programs and policies. A bill that shortchanges transportation options would be a step backwards for California and the entire nation — and this approach must be resisted.

This is a crucial time for our nation's infrastructure priorities and for California's efforts to revive our economy and meet the greenhouse gas emission targets in AB32.

[Insert relevant paragraphs]

Thank you again for all of your work advancing a transportation bill that improves invests in our future and puts Californians back to work.

Sincerely,

Specific Paragraphs: BIKE/PED

We're particularly concerned about proposals to roll back dedicated funding streams for bicycling and pedestrian projects. The transportation enhancements (TE), Recreational Trails and Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) programs are a lifeblood for our communities. They support vital projects that provide safe transportation options for children, seniors and those that cannot, or choose not to drive each trip.

According to the recently released report, "Dangerous by Design", 6,957 pedestrians were killed in California between 2000 and 2009. Too many arterial roads, even in urban areas, are simply not designed to accommodate pedestrians and sometimes lack sidewalks altogether. Of the 47,452 pedestrian fatalities for which the location of the collision is known, more than 40 percent occurred where no crosswalk was available. And just ten percent of pedestrian fatalities occurred inside a crosswalk. To eliminate programs that work to build sidewalks, bike lanes, trails and other street improvements to address safety issues and accessibility, as proposed in the House, would be a huge disservice to all Californians.

Specific Paragraphs: FREIGHT/ HEALTH

We are particularly concerned about policies surrounding freight and goods movement. With several major ports, California is the beginning and end point for billions of tons of freight arriving and departing the United States every year. As such, it also bears the brunt of the pollution associated with it. In fact, more than 40% of U.S. ship-borne freight moves through the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

Moving freight through this key part of the system comes with a large cost—the California Air Resources Board estimates that freight-related pollution was responsible for about 2,400 premature deaths, 2,000 respiratory-related hospital admissions, 62,000 asthma and lower respiratory cases, 360,000 lost work days, and 1.1 million lost school days in 2005 alone.

Additionally the freight sector alone represents nearly a quarter of all the transportation sector's greenhouse gas emissions and has been steadily increasing. Freight's emissions have increased almost 60% since 1990; more than double that of passenger travel (27%). The federal government should be focused on a multi-modal corridor approach that coordinates ports, rail shipping, trucks and more. Railroads are, on average, three or more times more fuel-efficient than trucks and have a smaller carbon footprint. Every ton-mile of freight moved by rail instead of truck reduced GHG emissions by two-thirds or more. This helps California reach its greenhouse gas emissions goals, as well reduce the health impacts on communities adjacent to Ports and major freight facilities. Focusing a freight program on a highways-only trucking approach would be an enormous step backwards and detrimental to the state of California.

Specific Paragraphs: TIFIA/PERFORMANCE

We now more than ever need your leadership to make sure that the surface transportation bill your committee drafts benefits and works for Californians. Locally, we have experimented with innovative financing tools such as LA 30/10. This has helped us kick start projects that might have not otherwise gotten off the ground. Federally, programs like the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program, have leveraged significant funding for projects such as intermodal freight, transit, railroad, highways, and port access. Because of their size and complexity, traditional financing can be difficult. With application rates far exceeding the funding available, currently \$12.5 billion, the performance measures associated with TIFIA applications have helped California rise to the top.

Congress should ensure that more programs follow suit in relying on performance metrics when measuring applications. TIFIA's metrics, which look at the extent to which the project is nationally and regionally significant, generates economic benefits, protects and maintains the environment through sustainability measures, and accelerates project delivery fit the frame that Californians view important

infrastructure investments. California competes well with such metrics, and abandoning performance measures in these programs would not only be detrimental to the quality of projects funded, it would also harm California's competitive edge.

Specific Paragraphs: PLANNING

Specifically, with passage of SB 375 California is leading the country in its work to reduce greenhouse gas omissions. Critical to effective implementation of SB 375 is for metropolitan planning organizations to prepare sustainable communities strategy documents detailing how the region will meet its future targeted greenhouse gas reduction. Updates to the long-range transportation planning process would be a great complement to the work California is doing under SB 375.

The current long-range transportation planning process is ineffective because it does not require states and regions' twenty-year long-range transportation plans to consider development pattern changes over time. Instead, the long-range transportation plans developed by states and regions consist of collecting a wish list of projects and projecting status quo trends into the future, rather than evaluating how different building and development scenarios might affect those trends. The current planning process results in the same unavoidable congestion, the same lengthening commutes, the same freight bottlenecks, and ever-increasing greenhouse gas emissions, not to mention the increasing cost to the consumer.

The planning process needs to be updated so that regions and states look at a range of different scenarios so that smarter transportation investment and development decisions are made based on a how each will make progress and meet community goals. By considering a wide range of options to achieve these future goals the community will have the opportunity to develop a consensus scenario that will best help them achieve this. Just like metropolitan planning organizations in California are preparing a sustainable communities strategy demonstrating how the region will meet its future greenhouse gas reduction target under strategic planning MPOs would be required to compare different scenario to meet future goals of congestion, freight bottlenecks, and ensuring the community has viable transportation options. This will ensure we make wise investments in our transportation infrastructure and thus good stewards of the taxpayers dollars.

Again, as you continue to work on reauthorization of the surface transportation bill, I/we believe it is critical that updates to the planning process are made to require states and regions to compare multiple different scenarios instead of continuing to assume the status quo.

Specific Paragraphs: STP

Critical to reauthorization of the surface transportation bill is a robust Surface Transportation Program, giving states and localities the flexibility to use funding to advance projects that are regional priorities as well as the sub-allocation of a portion of STP funds to metropolitan regions.

Many metropolitan communities in California have few roads on the National Highway System compared to the overall lane miles. For this reason the flexibility awarded to cities in California under the STP program is critical to meeting the needs of these communities. Additionally, this flexibility is important for California and the nation as a whole because it has helped advance important transit projects across the country. Specifically, here in California **INSERT EXAMPLE OF TRANSIT PROJECT** used flexed STP funds to move the critical project forward.

Just in the five-year period between 2005 and 2009 California flexed close to \$100 million in STP funds for transit projects. A reauthorization bill that took away this flexibility would be a step backwards and would not help California advance critical transit projects. Just as important is retaining the sub-allocation to metropolitan regions that face some of the greatest transportation infrastructure challenges. This sub-allocation allows metropolitan communities in California and across the country to advance a wide range of critical projects, from transit to bicycle and pedestrian projects. With this flexibility our metropolitan communities can ensure residents have transportation choice.

Specific Paragraphs: Transit

It is important for the reauthorization bill to include a strong transit program. A robust public transit system is important to providing transportation choice as well as reducing congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. Critical to improving access to transit both in California and across the country is the maintaining the flexibility for a state to use a portion of their highway funding for transit project. Here in California, over the ten-year period between 1992 and 2002 thirty-one percent of allocated highway funding was flexed to fund important transit projects across the state. Across the country, during the same period over \$14 billion in highway funding was flexed to fund important public transit investments.