

TRANSPORTATION CONSTRUCTION COALITION

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December 2, 2015

Dear Representatives:

The 31 national association and construction trade union members of the Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC) urge all House members to support H.R. 22, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The FAST Act represents the first long-term surface transportation bill in over a decade and provides policy reforms and critical investments to support needed highway and public transportation improvements across the nation.

The five-year bill would provide 15 percent and 21 percent growth for highway and transit capital programs, respectively, from current investment levels. While the bill does not meet the current demonstrated needs of the nation's surface transportation system, it is a marked improvement from the baseline funding levels present at the federal level since FY 2012.

The TCC appreciates Congress building upon the national freight program created in the MAP-21 surface transportation law by investing $1.26 annually in projects designed to improve the swift and efficient movement of goods in the U.S. This program, paired with the $900 million annual investment through the Nationally Significant Freight & Highway Projects program, will lay the groundwork for a dedicated highway freight capital investment program that, up to this point, has been a void in federal transportation policy.

The TCC has long advocated changes to the transportation project environmental review and approval process to accelerate the delivery of needed transportation improvements. The FAST Act includes a host of new reforms that would help achieve this goal, such as eliminating duplication in the environmental review and project planning stages, strengthening the ability of the U.S. Department of Transportation to manage other federal agencies involved in transportation project reviews and permitting, and clarifying and expanding the use of categorical exclusions.

While a growing program and necessary policy changes are helpful, one major absence in the FAST Act is the lack of a long-term Highway Trust Fund (HTF) revenue solution. The FAST Act provides enough HTF revenue to cover the five year investments authorized. Unfortunately, the prospect of another Highway Trust Fund revenue crisis will start impacting states well before the FAST Act expires. Therefore, Congress should not wait until 2020 to solve this problem, but rather take every opportunity in the coming months and years to develop a sustainable and reliable revenue plan to continue supporting federal surface transportation investments.

We urge all House members to support H.R. 22 as a final step towards a long-term, fully funded surface transportation law.

Sincerely,

The Transportation Construction Coalition