

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 10, 2012

The Honorable John A. Boehner
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232 United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We are writing to you concerning the recent warning by Standard and Poor's on the severe economic and public safety consequences of unpredictable federal funding for the nation's transportation programs. This report by Standard and Poor's is another wake up call for the need for immediate action on a bipartisan transportation bill.

In order to provide stability and certainty as quickly as possible, the House of Representatives should take up and pass the Senate's bipartisan bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21).

The warning by Standard and Poor's underscores the serious risk posed by inaction and extensions to the nation's transportation sector, and to the millions of jobs that rely upon it. Although the unemployment rate ticked down to 8.2% in March, the unemployment rate for construction workers stands at 17.2%, still more than double the national average. This report and the continued high unemployment rate for construction workers also illustrate the urgent need for action. We need to avoid controversy and pass a bipartisan bill that will be signed by the President as soon as possible.

The bipartisan Senate bill would reform our Federal surface transportation programs to maximize the ability of states and local governments to make wise infrastructure investments in highways and public transportation. These reforms include consolidating numerous programs to focus resources on key national goals, accelerating project delivery while maintaining important public health and environmental protections, eliminating earmarks, and providing accountability for how transportation dollars are spent by focusing on key outcomes, such as reducing fatalities, improving road and bridge conditions, reducing congestion, and making freight movement more efficient.

MAP-21 would also provide a stable source of funding without adding to the deficit and would enable Congress to work together on a longer term transportation plan, while at the same time averting a crisis that would put thousands of businesses and millions of jobs at risk.

The House must pass this legislation for the businesses and the working people of this country, for the drivers of cars and trucks, for the users of public transportation, for the safety of our families in this country, and for this economy.

Sincerely,


Barbara Boxer
Chairman
Committee on Environment
and Public Works


Tim Johnson
Chairman
Committee on Banking,
Housing and Urban Affairs