TRANSPORTATION CONSTRUCTION COALITION

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July 13, 2015

Dear Senator:

The members of the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee proved June 24 that enactment of a six-year surface transportation bill with meaningful policy reforms and increased investment levels is not only achievable, but can be accomplished with broad bipartisan support. The Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy (DRIVE) Act's unanimous approval by the EPW Committee should ignite an aggressive push to complete action on a full bill this month.

The nation's surface transportation needs are well documented and all Americans know the toll increasing traffic congestion places on their daily lives. Failure to enhance the nation's road, bridge and public transportation networks is also an impediment to economic growth. According to the 2014 – 2015 Global Competitiveness report, the U.S. economy earned the third highest total competitiveness score among all nations, but the quality of the overall U.S. infrastructure ranked 12th and our nation's road infrastructure trailed even further at 16th in the world.

At the same time America's infrastructure weaknesses become more apparent, the federal surface transportation programs have endured multiple short-term extensions since 2009. The Highway Trust Fund (HTF) has suffered five cash flow crises requiring $65 billion in temporary cash infusions since 2008. This long-term cycle of uncertainty and piecemeal management undermines the ability of state transportation departments to implement multi-year transportation plans and discourages the private sector from making investments in new capital and personnel.

Furthermore, due to the looming 2015 trust fund crisis and related uncertainty about future surface transportation funds, seven states have delayed or canceled projects valued at $1.6 billion. The Congressional Budget Office projects the trust fund will be unable to support any new highway or transit spending in FY 2016 without remedial action. It should be clear to all by now that further short-term extensions are not optimal and past extensions have not led to a lasting solution to the HTF's repeated revenue shortfalls.

To that end, the 31 national associations and construction trade unions of the Transportation Construction Coalition strongly support passage of a six-year surface transportation reauthorization bill with at least DRIVE Act investment levels by July 31 over another temporary extension. We urge all senators to commit to achieving this goal.

Sincerely,

The Transportation Construction Coalition