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July 29, 2010

SUPPORT H.R. 5850 AND THE DEFAZIO AMENDMENT

Dear Representative:

The 29 national associations and construction trade unions of the Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC) strongly support the proposed highway, transit and aviation investment levels included in the FY 2011 Department of Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations Act (H.R. 5850). While we urge all members of the House to vote for this important legislation to support jobs and help grow the economy, we would like to draw your attention to several pending amendments.

Representative DeFazio will offer an amendment that would make the \$200 million in highway formula funds H.R. 5850 redirects to a new "Livable Communities" discretionary grant program contingent on an authorization. This amendment would simply ensure any decision about allocating scarce federal funds to a new, loosely defined livability initiative would be made in a multi-year reauthorization bill where this type of proposal can be considered in the context of long-term national surface transportation needs.

The growing transportation infrastructure challenges facing the U.S. demand a comprehensive and aggressive solution, as opposed to the selective pursuit of narrow priorities through the annual appropriations process. Those interested in pursuing the Administration's livability initiative should focus their efforts on advancing the nearly one-year overdue multi-year surface transportation bill. To that end, we urge all members to support the DeFazio Amendment to H.R. 5850.

The House will also consider amendments by Representatives Latham (#78), Culberson (#71), Neugebauer (#75), Kirkpatrick (#105), Jordan (#7), Peters-Adler-Himes-Welch (#106), and Bachman (#48) that would each cut various transportation investment programs. Given the nation's vast unmet transportation infrastructure challenges and the over 20 percent unemployment in the construction industry, we urge you to oppose any effort to scale back H.R. 5850's transportation investment levels.

Thank you for your consideration of these views and again we urge all members to support H.R. 5850 to further boost economic recovery and stabilize construction sector employment.

Sincerely,

The Transportation Construction Coalition