

**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

NEIL L. BRADLEY
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT &
CHIEF POLICY OFFICER

1615 H STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20062
(202) 463-5310

June 15, 2021

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Chair
Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Cantwell and Ranking Member Wicker:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce strongly supports S. 2016, the “Surface Transportation Investment Act of 2021,” and urges your committee to report advance this legislation expeditiously. The Chamber applauds your constructive, bipartisan approach in developing this legislation, which presents a model for addressing America’s critical infrastructure needs. This bipartisan approach is particularly important at a time when some senators appear too willing to abandon discussions that can lead to long-term, durable infrastructure policy.

In addition to authorizing significant levels of funding, the bill also makes important project delivery enhancements. This includes provisions to improve the efficiency of freight planning and leveraging limited resources by improving the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing Program (RRIF).

We support the inclusion of a new office of Multimodal Freight Infrastructure and Policy as well as updates to the National Freight Strategic Plan, as well as the bill’s substantial improvements to the RRIF program to make it a more attractive and useful tool for supplemental private sector investment.

Reauthorizing these programs prior to their September 30, 2021 expiration will provide the certainty of federal commitment needed to allow state, local, and private partners to move forward with needed planning and construction of modern, resilient surface transportation. These authorized investments will ensure economic benefits to both rural and urban regions.

Finally, we urge the Committee to adopt an amendment from Senator Thune that would accelerate the safe testing, development, and deployment of automated vehicle technology. The amendment is identical to S. 1885, the “AV START Act,” that this committee adopted on a bipartisan basis during the 115th Congress.

With less than four months until the current authorization expires, the Chamber greatly appreciates the urgency with which you are acting on these critical issues. Your Committee and the members of the Environment and Public Works Committee are providing a blue print for the

members of the Senate Banking and Finance Committees to follow to ensure the Senate can take up the full legislative package this summer.

The Chamber urges you to report this legislation favorably.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Neil L. Bradley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Neil L. Bradley

cc: Members of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation