

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NEIL L. BRADLEY
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT &
CHIEF POLICY OFFICER

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May 25, 2021

The Honorable Thomas Carper
Chairman
Committee on Environment and
Public Works
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment and
Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ben Cardin
Chairman
Transportation and Infrastructure
Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin Cramer
Ranking Member
Transportation and Infrastructure
Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Carper and Cardin and Ranking Members Capito and Cramer:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act (STRA) of 2021 as you move to mark up the bill tomorrow. Your constructive, bipartisan approach is a model for addressing America's critical infrastructure needs. This is particularly important at a time when some appear too willing to abandon discussions that can lead to long-term, durable infrastructure policy.

In addition to authorizing historic levels of highway funding – a 34 percent increase over current funding levels – STRA would make important project delivery enhancements, including provisions to improve the efficiency of environmental reviews, and to allow funding eligibility for utility relocation on complex projects.

The bill addresses climate issues with an emphasis on resilience and by encouraging private sector innovation to build more durable infrastructure. The National Motor Vehicle Per-Mile User Fee Pilot would help move to a funding mechanism that ensures all users of the system – regardless of how vehicles are powered – are contributing to the building and maintenance of the surface transportation network, a concept the Chamber supports.

STRA would also enhance the ease and usage of the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program. The Chamber believes these reforms will encourage more private investment to supplement, not replace, limited federal dollars.

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.

With less than five months until the current authorization expires, the Chamber greatly appreciates the urgency with which the Committee is acting on these critical issues. You are providing a blueprint for the Senate Banking, Commerce, and Finance Committees to follow to ensure the Senate can take up the full package this summer.

The Chamber urges all committee members to vote “Yes” on moving this important bill forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Neil L. Bradley", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Neil L. Bradley

cc: Members of the Committee on Environment and Public Works