



April 24, 2009

The Honorable Henry Waxman
House Energy & Commerce Committee
House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Waxman:

We are writing to thank you for your leadership in advancing strong federal climate legislation. We were encouraged to see that a section of your climate discussion draft (Subtitle C, Section 222: 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions Through Transportation Efficiency') recognizes the significant contribution that states and regions can make in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector. Thank you for including this section in your discussion draft. We believe that it is of utmost importance for the federal climate change legislation to set a framework for the next federal transportation authorization, as this will help ensure our climate and transportation policies operate on parallel instead of conflicting paths.

We would like to see this section of the bill maintained, but we believe this section would be most effective in getting cost-effective emissions reductions with the following changes:

- It is vitally important for the federal government to provide funding to state, regional and local governments to create and implement plans for reducing emissions from the transportation sector. Section 222 calls for a competitive grant program associated with this planning process, but it does not specify funding amounts or sources. Given the large contribution the transportation sector makes to greenhouse gas emissions and its potential for cost-effective reductions, we recommend that at least 10 percent of the total value of the climate bill be dedicated to the planning and construction of emission-reducing transportation projects, including public transportation, rail, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure, similar to the approach taken in H.R. 1329, the Clean, Low-Emission, Affordable, New Transportation Efficiency Act (CLEAN-TEA).
- This section should take steps to ensure that states and regions create goals and plans that will contribute towards emissions reductions commensurate with the goals outlined in the bill overall. While there cannot be a one size-fits-all

approach for all states and regions, we believe that it is important that Congress encourage the development of meaningful goals and plans. Without some standard for success and monitoring of progress, we fear this section could simply become another planning exercise without much impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

As you know, the transportation sector is the fastest growing source of national greenhouse gas emissions, and the second largest single source, responsible for more than one-third of overall emissions nationally. The share is far larger than that, of course, in many individual states and metro areas. Analysis shows that the price signal from a carbon cap will have only a minor impact on transportation emissions, because automobile travel responds only marginally to small changes in the price of fuel. Many Americans live in communities that lack convenient and reliable access to public transportation or walking and bicycling facilities. This situation persists despite unprecedented demand for more walkable communities with better transportation choices. Lacking more affordable options, families are being squeezed by transportation costs, which are now the second largest average expense after housing, consuming nearly 20 percent of household income on average. Therefore, it is critical that the comprehensive cap is paired with complementary transportation policies like the one called for in your draft bill.

The transportation efficiency section of your draft climate bill calls on states and metropolitan planning organizations to develop goals and plans for reducing emissions from the transportation sector. According to a recent analysis from the Center for Clean Air Policy, by implementing the comprehensive application of best practices for reducing vehicle miles traveled in metro areas, we have the ability nationally to reduce emissions from the transportation sector by 145 MMTCO₂ by 2030. This analysis indicates that these reductions can be achieved with significant net positive economic benefits, yielding a negative cost per ton, when factoring in avoided infrastructure costs, consumer fuel and insurance cost savings and projected tax revenue growth from high value economic development.

Their analysis examines long term regional plans that have been modeled by places like the Sacramento region, which found that by improving transportation choices and developing more efficiently, they could reduce emissions in the region by 7.2 MMTCO₂ by 2050, while reducing infrastructure costs by \$9 billion. Taking into account both consumer fuel savings and increased transit costs, CCAP estimated a net economic benefit of negative \$198/ton for the Sacramento region. There are also a host of other benefits that result from helping communities reduce emissions by growing smarter and providing more travel options, including reduced household energy use, savings in household transportation spending, improved energy security, and improved public health as people walk and bike more and breathe cleaner air. Low-carbon transportation projects also create well paying, green jobs, which is especially important in today's economic climate.

Thank you again for your leadership and for addressing transportation policy in your draft bill. We look forward to working with you as this important legislation moves forward. We also hope you will also be engaged in working with the Transportation and Infrastructure committee to help craft surface transportation legislation that is supportive of your legislation and our country's climate goals.

Sincerely,

Transportation for America
Association for Commuter Transportation
American Institute of Architects
America Bikes
American Society of Landscape Architects
American Planning Association
American Public Health Association
Center for Rural Strategies
Coalition for Smarter Growth
Community Streetcar Coalition
Environmental & Energy Study Institute
League of American Bicyclists
National Association of City Transportation Officials
New Starts Working Group
Northeast Midwest Institute
Reconnecting America
Smart Growth America
Transportation Alternatives
Trek to Re-Energize
Truck Safety Coalition
Trust for America's Health

AZ

Arizona Transit Association

CA

City of San Francisco
County of San Francisco
Greenbelt Alliance
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Move San Diego
San Francisco Municipal Transit Authority
The Transit Coalition
Train Riders Association of California

CO

Bicycle Colorado
Colorado Environmental Coalition

CT

Connecticut Association for Community Transportation
Connecticut Fund for the Environment
Connecticut League of Conservation Voters
Elm City Cycling
Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority
Transit for Connecticut
1000 Friends of Connecticut

HI

People's Advocacy for Trails Hawaii
Hawaii Balanced Transportation Alliance

MD

The Action Committee for Transit

MI

Michigan Environmental Council
Michigan Suburbs Alliance
Transportation Riders United

MN

Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
Conservation Minnesota
Environment Minnesota
Transit for Livable Communities
1,000 Friends of Minnesota
Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority Chair and Hennepin County Commissioner

NJ

New Jersey Future

NM

Greater Albuquerque Housing Partnership

NY

Vision Long Island

OH

All Aboard Ohio
Bike Walk Ohio
Walk+Roll Cleveland

OR

TriMet
David Bragdon, Metro Council President

PA

Bike Pittsburgh
PennEnvironment
PenTrans
PennFuture
Sustainable Pittsburgh
10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania

TX

Fort Worth Transportation Authority (The T)
Houston Tomorrow

VA

Anacostia Watershed Society
Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation
BikeLoudoun
BikeWalk VA
Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling
Mattawoman Watershed society
Shenandoah Valley Network
Virginia Bicycling Federation
Virginia Conservation Network
Virginia League of Conservation Voters

WA

Environment Washington
Transportation Choices Coalition
WashPIRG
Ron Sims, King County Executive