

Metropolitan Planning Council

June 16, 2020

The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Chair, U.S. House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
The Honorable Sam Graves, Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Chair, Highways & Transit Subcommittee
The Honorable Rodney Davis, Ranking Member, Highways & Transit Subcommittee

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington D.C.

Dear Representatives DeFazio, Graves, Delegate Holmes Norton, and Representative Davis,

The Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) is writing to express our support for the INVEST in America Act introduced to the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure last week. This bill charts a course to updating our country's outdated transportation policy, and takes a huge step towards aligning our federal funding with the outcomes Americans value. We are proud to support this bill and commend your committee for making it a reality. However, we urge you strengthen requirements that prioritize maintenance over new roadway construction. We must take care of our existing system before expanding it.

Since 1934, MPC has been dedicated to shaping a more equitable, sustainable and prosperous greater Chicago region. As an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, MPC serves communities and residents by developing, promoting and implementing solutions for sound regional growth.

New policy is desperately needed to ensure that our transportation system works for people—with infrastructure in good condition, safer roadway design that will save lives, and access to jobs and services through multiple modes of travel. The INVEST Act is a thoughtful bill that begins to address those issues.

While we strongly support the big step forward this bill takes, we urge you to tighten the language that ensures funds cannot be spent on new roadway construction before maintenance needs are met. Prioritizing maintenance will ensure that funding is distributed in an equitable manner. Every community has existing maintenance needs, but only some have the capacity to develop shovel-ready projects. We also urge you to increase funding for transit to create more balance in the federal transportation program, support efforts to improve maintenance, and provide more reliable service.

This legislation makes essential changes to update the nation's surface transportation system and address today's needs and goals. We're excited about this bill's potential to transform American transportation and urge you to improve this bill and then approve it.

Sincerely,



Audrey Wennink
Director of Transportation

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