



August 14, 2019

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
U.S. House of Representatives
2251 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Davis
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
U.S. House of Representatives
H-591 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Chairman DeFazio, Ranking Member Graves, Chairwoman Norton, and Ranking Member Davis:

The Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) supports a more efficient and effective transportation system that employs Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies to reduce congestion and carbon emissions with innovative technologies that increase connectivity and mobility for American workers and students.

The rapid pace of technological advancement continues to redefine the transportation sector along with many other areas of the U.S. economy. While the 2015 Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act represented a significant improvement in Federal transportation policy, it included little with respect to TDM and technology-enabled mobility. As Congress works to enact new surface transportation legislation, it now has the opportunity to incorporate forward-looking TDM provisions that can transform and improve the American public's transportation system while further reducing congestion and pollution.

We are pleased that the Senate Environment & Public Works (EPW) Committee has advanced S. 2302, America's Transportation Infrastructure Act (ATIA), their portion of the next surface transportation authorization bill, out of the committee. ATIA includes several important provisions that promise to modernize America's transportation system. However, there still needs to be a greater focus on creating a multimodal transportation system that moves people while reducing congestion, improving air quality, and stimulating economic activity. We are pleased to provide our comments on the EPW legislation and recommendations for moving forward.

It is essential that the next surface transportation authorization bill should include a definition of TDM and TDM strategies. Currently, ATIA does not include a definition of these topics:



Definition of TDM: the use of strategies to inform and encourage travelers to maximize the efficiency of a transportation system leading to improved mobility, reduced congestion, and lower vehicle emissions.

Definition of TDM strategies: the use of planning, programs, policy, marketing, communications, incentives, pricing, and technology to shift travel mode, routes used, departure times, number of trips, and location and design workspace or public attractions.

Codifying these definitions and including TDM in the planning process for federal, state, regional, and local transportation plans will be a major step forward in creating an efficient transportation system that maximizes the use of our existing infrastructure.

ACT supports the bill's emphasis on increasing program-wide authorization levels but would welcome additional funds for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program. This program has proved a popular tool for local governments and planning organizations to fund transportation modes, projects, and strategies that help reduce harmful emissions. Additionally, ACT supports the creation of the accessibility data pilot program (section 1204), the community connectivity pilot program (section 1508), and the focus on research and development for emerging technology in transportation (section 3004 and 3005). More information and open data are critical for planners and other stakeholders making transportation project decisions as well as for new technology innovators that can help move commuters more efficiently. These new programs will help improve transportation planning, help decision makers understand where new technology and rapidly changing modes of transportation fit into the user system and help break down community barriers that can reduce commuter options and lead to inefficiencies.

Finally, ACT is supportive of the new programs found in Title I, Subtitle D – Climate Change. The carbon reduction incentive program (section 1403) and congestion relief program (section 1404) both provide funding opportunities to reduce the carbon footprint of transportation activities and fund TDM strategies. However, ACT would like to see a more narrowly focused formula program included in the legislation, solely dedicated to providing states funding that can be used for TDM strategies. This would authorize narrowly focused, proven strategies to help achieve the goal of emissions reduction through commuter efficiencies.

The next surface transportation authorization bill will have profound impact on America's transportation system. New policies and programs must be included that support connectivity, multimodality, and reduce carbon emissions. The Association for Commuter Transportation appreciates your attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to working with you to meet this challenge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Straus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a stylized "S".

David Straus
Executive Director