



The Ohio Congressional Delegation
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

February 18, 2011

RE: SAFETEA-LU Re-Authorization

Honorable Members of the Ohio Congressional Delegation:

We appreciate your continued support of public transportation within your district and across the state of Ohio. As Congress takes on the task of Re-Authorization of the Highway and Transit funding bill we ask for your consideration of the needs of transit system customers across our state.

Public transportation can help to ensure a secure and sustainable future for America. For the last half century, America's national transportation vision focused on building a system of interstate roads to connect the geography of the nation. The next 50 years need to focus on travel options which connect people and enable prosperity in America's bustling economic growth centers. Just as the interstate highway system resulted from federal policy and participation, future transportation options will also require the continuation of that leadership.

The federal transportation program should promote increased public transportation ridership and provide the necessary resources to achieve national goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and conserve limited energy resources. It should also offer increased investment in sustainable practices within the public transportation industry. By promoting energy efficient public transportation vehicles and facilities and encouraging efficient land use near public transportation routes, Congress can enhance the environmental and fuel conservation benefits that result from public transportation, and help individuals, and therefore the nation, reduce their carbon footprints.

Ohio's 59 rural and urban transit systems stand ready to support your efforts to insure a new transportation bill that supports a multi-modal approach to seamless travel within our state and throughout the nation. We have enclosed our position paper for your review and consideration and are prepared to meet with you to discuss its content and what our organizations and customers can do to assist you during the reauthorization process.



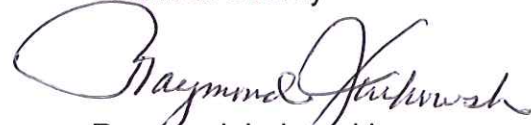
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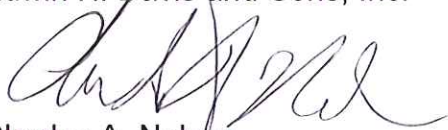
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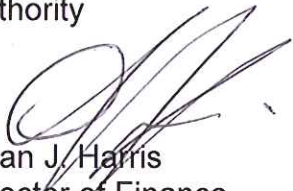
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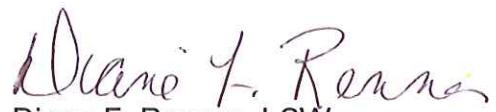
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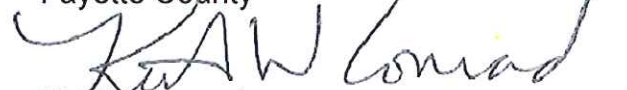
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SAFETEA-LU Reauthorization



Four Ohioans use public transit every second of every day!

January 2010



RE-AUTHORIZATION OF SAFETEA-LU OHIO PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDATIONS JANUARY 2010

Public transportation helps ensure a secure and sustainable future for America. For the last half century, America's national transportation vision focused on building a system of interstate highways to connect the geography of the nation. For the next 50 years the focus should be on travel options that connect people and enable prosperity in America's bustling economic growth centers.

The OPTA proposal focuses on six principal objectives:

- More than double federal investment in public transportation to address capital needs and growing demand for public transportation service
- Strengthen funding guarantees needed for long-term, lasting capital investment projects
- Provide maximum flexibility at the local level in determining how federal funds are used
- Streamline project delivery and simplify the needs-based federal transit program structure
- Enhance transit's role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and conserving energy
- Promote the development of a skilled industry workforce

OPTA's Guiding Principles of Authorization

- ✚ Congress should authorize a significant increase in the federal public transportation program, with a total investment of no less than \$123 billion over the six-year authorization period, with a goal of meeting at least 50% of the estimated \$60 billion in annual capital needs by the end of the authorization period, and to support a projected doubling of ridership over the next 20 years. A chart detailing the proposed funding levels is included in the back of this report.
- ✚ Public transportation funding guarantees should be strengthened to ensure that authorized funds are appropriated each year to allow for the long-range planning, financing and leveraging needed to advance necessary investment in public transportation capital projects and preserve and maintain the existing public transportation infrastructure in a "state of good repair."
- ✚ Congress should take necessary steps to restore, maintain and increase the purchasing power of the federal motor fuels user fee to support a significant increase in the federal investment for the public transportation program. OPTA recommends the establishment of a commission to develop an equitable user fee proposal for alternative fuels.

- ✚ Congress should promote the development of revenue generated from innovative financing mechanisms, such as public private partnerships, tolling and congestion pricing to supplement current revenue streams. Future federal energy and climate change legislation should be used to supplement - not substitute - funding provided through the federal highway and public transportation authorization legislation.
- ✚ The federal public transportation program should retain no less than an 80% federal match ratio for all capital public transportation projects, including the New Starts program.
- ✚ Congress should preserve a “needs-based” approach to the distribution of funds under the federal public transportation program which builds on the current program structure and begins to address unmet program needs. OPTA encourages consideration of additional funding (or higher federal participation rates) for regions with unemployment rates above the national average.
- ✚ Congress should create incentives to increase state and local investment levels in public transportation.
- ✚ Federal authorizing legislation for federal highway and public transportation investment should ensure that public transportation programs receive no less than 20% of all federal funds invested in surface transportation infrastructure.
- ✚ Congress should simplify and streamline the current federal grant approval process to speed project delivery and reduce costs.
- ✚ The federal public transportation program should recognize the cost of compliance with federal requirements and provide capital and operating assistance to meet those requirements and to help public transportation providers address costs, which are beyond their ability to control. Federal law should also encourage state, local and private sector support for such expenses.
- ✚ Congress should act to provide maximum flexibility at the local level in determining how federal funds are used. Public transportation systems in urbanized areas should be authorized to use FTA Sections 5307 and 5309 funds for operating purposes. In addition, OPTA recommends that the federal authorizing law be revised to allow program income in the form of passenger fares to be considered as local match in any calculation relative to use of funds for operating assistance.
- ✚ The federal public transportation program should support greater investment in research and development programs that will enhance service delivery, promote “best practices” through technical standards, and increase the operational efficiency of transportation systems. Such new investment should not be funded at the expense of the traditional formula program.

- ✚ The federal public transportation program should provide program funding to promote workforce development and career opportunities in the public transportation industry. Such new investment should not be funded at the expense of the traditional formula program.
- ✚ Federal authorizing law should ensure the consideration of public transportation alternatives within a multimodal regional and statewide transportation planning process, which is designed to achieve sustainable outcomes in plans, programs, and projects. There should be a balance of environmental (including greenhouse gas and climate change considerations), economic and social equity objectives in the process.

New Program Funding Options

- ✚ The new bill should include a new defined revenue source to pay debt service on bonds for large scale highway/public transportation core capacity/expansion improvements.
- ✚ Congress should support longer-term efforts to transition the trust fund from motor fuel taxes/fees to a vehicle mileage tax and/or a vehicle weight/mile tax.
- ✚ The federal program should dedicate a portion of a new national sales tax or similar consumption-based tax to support and expand the Mass Transit Account.
- ✚ Congress should examine the longer-term viability of innovative financing techniques, including: public-private partnerships, federal loan guarantees, tax exempt/tax credit bonds, tolling and congestion pricing, value capture increment financing, and other mechanisms that consider changes in energy use and reduce state and regional carbon footprints.

Recommended Funding Levels

Program	FY 2009 (Thousands)	FY 2010 (Thousands)	FY 2011 (Thousands)	FY 2012 (Thousands)	FY 2013 (Thousands)	FY 2014 (Thousands)	FY 2015 (Thousands)	Six Years 2010-2015 (Thousands)
Total All Programs	10,338,065	12,405,679	14,886,814	17,864,176	21,437,013	25,724,412	30,369,296	123,187,390
Formula Programs Total	8,360,565	10,075,092	12,086,723	14,504,069	17,404,884	20,885,858	25,063,032	100,019,658
§ 5307 Urbanized Area	4,160,365	5,466,210	6,567,393	7,880,872	9,457,047	11,348,455	13,618,147	54,338,124
§ 5340 Growing States and High Density States	465,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
§ 5311 Rural Area	465,000	610,953	734,031	880,838	1,057,005	1,268,406	1,522,087	6,073,320
§ 5310 Elderly and Disabled	133,500	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
§ 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute	164,500	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
§ 5317 New Freedom	92,500	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Coordinated Mobility Initiative	—	466,201	560,118	672,142	806,570	967,884	1,161,461	4,634,376
§ 3038 Over-the Road Bus	8,800	10,506	12,622	15,147	18,176	21,811	26,174	104,436
§ 5309(m)(2)(B) Fixed-Guideway Modernization	1,666,500	2,129,720	2,558,758	3,070,509	3,684,611	4,421,533	5,305,840	21,170,971
§ 5309(m)(2)(l) Bus Formula	984,000	532,430	639,689	767,627	921,153	1,105,383	1,326,460	5,292,742
§ 5309(m)(2)(l) Bus Facilities	—	532,430	639,689	767,627	921,153	1,105,383	1,326,460	5,292,742
§ 5308 Clean Fuels Formula	51,500	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Clean Fuels Aging Bus Replacement Program	—	100,000	120,145	144,174	173,009	207,611	249,133	994,072
§ 5305 Planning	113,500	135,503	162,800	195,360	234,432	281,318	337,582	1,346,995
§ 5320 Alternative Transportation in Parks	26,900	32,115	38,584	46,301	55,561	66,674	80,008	319,243
Workforce Development Research	—	15,000	—	—	—	—	—	15,000
Workforce Development Training	—	10,000	12,015	14,417	17,301	20,761	24,913	99,407
§ 5335 Reports and Audits	3,500	4,178	5,020	6,024	7,229	8,675	10,410	41,536
§ 5339 Alternatives Analysis	25,000	29,846	35,859	43,031	51,637	61,964	74,357	296,694
§ 5309(m)(2)(A) New Starts	1,809,250	2,129,720	2,558,758	3,070,509	3,684,611	4,421,533	5,305,840	21,170,971
Research Total	69,750	83,272	100,048	120,056	144,068	172,881	207,456	827,781
§ 5313(a) TCRP	10,000	11,939	14,344	17,212	20,655	24,786	29,743	118,679
§ 5315 National Transit Inst.	4,300	5,134	6,168	7,401	8,882	10,658	12,789	51,032
§ 5314 National Research	48,450	57,842	69,495	83,394	100,073	120,087	144,104	574,995
§ 5506 University Centers	7,000	8,357	10,041	12,049	14,458	17,350	20,820	83,075
FTA Operations	98,500	117,595	141,285	169,542	203,450	244,140	292,968	1,168,980



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT