

May 22, 2003

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley:

As Congress begins the process of rewriting the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21), the undersigned associations – all of whom advocate an increased federal investment in the surface transportation infrastructure – want to express our agreement on a number of important principles. The Finance Committee will have a critical role in developing this legislation and we look forward to working with you as Congress addresses this important issue.

Each of our organizations has developed independent reauthorization proposals that are similar in many respects. All of our organizations agree that stable, predictable and guaranteed funding for highways and transit is essential, including trust fund support for both the Highway Account and the Mass Transit Account. Since enactment of the 1982 Surface Transportation Assistance Act, which increased the motor fuels taxes by five cents, with one cent for transit, all subsequent increases in the motor fuels user fees have included this approach to meeting surface transportation needs. Our respective reauthorization proposals support maintaining this principle in legislation to reauthorize TEA 21.

This balanced approach is important from a public policy perspective, but it is also important for the highway/transit coalition it fosters, which allows us to work together to meet the needs of our unified transportation system. We support maintaining the existing balanced approach to addressing highway and transit needs. Our united focus is on the need for increased federal investment in highways and transit, and we respectfully request your support in that regard.

Again, we appreciate your leadership in ensuring adequate funding levels for highways and transit as Congress moves forward with TEA 21 reauthorization, and look forward to working with you in that regard in the coming months.

Sincerely yours,



American Association of State Highway
and Transportation Officials



American Public Transportation Association



American Road and Transportation Builders
Association

JH/WWM/PR/cbo