



April 5, 2014

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chairwoman
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Boxer,

On behalf of the New England Council, I am writing to express support for the consideration of legislation that will provide for a long-term reauthorization of the nation's surface transportation policy.

The New England Council is the nation's oldest regional business organization, and promotes federal policies and initiatives that enhance the economy and quality of life within New England. Our membership includes engineering and construction firms, labor organizations, transportation planning organizations, highway user groups, various other transportation-related firms and associations and, of course, numerous businesses that while not directly engaged in the field of transportation, are dependent upon the transportation network for their very existence. These members represent thousands of jobs across the New England region and each can attest to the importance of a strong federal transportation policy.

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP21) authorizes spending for federal highway, transit, and road safety programs. This law continued the long line of successful surface transportation bills molded by Congress to help address America's transportation network needs. MAP21 contained a number of important reforms to help harmonize project delivery, increase accountability, and enhance safety. However, as I'm sure you are keenly aware, MAP21 will expire less than 200 days from now. It is imperative that we build on the strengths of MAP21 through new legislation which will mean continued growth in New England and the nation.

Developing a long-term surface transportation bill that can garner bipartisan support is a challenge; finding a means by which to fund such a bill will be an even greater challenge. The New England Council applauds the interest that has been shown by leaders in both the House and the Senate for pursuing a long-term reauthorization bill. Both Chambers have taken a serious approach in Committee hearings toward furthering such legislation, and we look forward to the continued steps that will be taken in this regard. The Council is also pleased that the President has expressed support for a multi-year approach which is incorporated in his budget blueprint and is anticipated to soon be released in legislative text.

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There is little doubt that a robust surface transportation network provides tremendous benefits for job creation and serves as the literal backbone for economic growth and vitality. The New England Council urges the Environment and Public Works Committee and the full Senate to approve a long-term reauthorization proposal as soon as possible. We look forward to a continued dialogue on this critical issue and offer our assistance in helping to advance this crucial initiative.

Very truly yours,



Emily Heisig
Senior Vice President, Communications & Federal Affairs
The New England Council