

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials - American Road & Transportation Builders Association - American Public Transportation Association - Amalgamated Transit Union - America Bikes - American Concrete Pavement Association - American Council of Engineering Companies - American Highway Users Alliance - American Society of Civil Engineers - American Traffic Safety Services Association American Trucking Associations - Associated Equipment Distributors - Associated General Contractors of America - Association for Commuter Transportation - Association of Equipment Manufacturers - Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations - International Union of Operating Engineers - Laborers' International Union of North America - League of American Bicyclists - National Asphalt Pavement Association - National Association of Counties - National Association of Development Organizations - National Ready Mixed Concrete Association - New Starts Working Group - Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO - Safe Routes to School National Partnership - United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America

April 1, 2010

The Honorable John Kerry  
218 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
290 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Joseph Lieberman  
706 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Kerry, Graham and Lieberman:

On behalf of the organizations signed below, we write to urge you to develop a proposal for climate and energy legislation that retains the long-standing principle of dedicating revenues derived from transportation motor fuels to improving the nation's highway and public transportation systems. To that end, we hope to work with you to develop a strategy that promotes energy independence, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and improves the condition of critical transportation infrastructure.

Federal motor fuel user fees have supported the Federal Highway Trust Fund since 1956 and the Mass Transit Account of the Trust Fund since 1982. These user fees are the lifeblood of our highways and transit systems which move millions of people and tons of cargo every day. Previous increases in the federal motor fuels tax rate in 1990 and 1993 dedicated some revenue to temporary, short-term deficit reduction, an important goal that remains relevant today, but every other increase has supported long-term investment in our transportation infrastructure. Since 1997 all motor fuel revenues have been deposited in the Trust Fund.

Our surface transportation system faces monumental challenges. The needs of our roads and transit systems far exceed current investment levels. The U.S. Department of Transportation estimates that more than \$30 billion per year of new investment is needed simply to maintain our highways, bridges, and transit systems in their current state of repair and \$75 billion of new investment is needed annually to improve conditions and performance. Unfortunately, the current authorizing law for highway and transit programs expired last year and has been repeatedly extended on a short-term basis. This prevents states and transit agencies from advancing much-needed transportation projects that require predictable, multi-year funding. Further, the Highway Trust Fund has required several transfers of funds over the past three years and a restoration of interest payments to remain temporarily solvent, but it still cannot sustain the current rate of outlays. Any proposal to divert user fees from motor fuels while our roads, bridges, and transit systems are neglected is not sound policy.

The solution to the transportation crisis is the quick passage of a new multi-year authorization bill that accelerates job creation with significant new investment and institutes a more performance-oriented federal transportation program. Enacting a new transportation bill quickly will be very difficult, if not impossible, should Congress approve legislation that diverts revenue from carbon-based fees from motor fuels away from the transportation investment.

Failure to enact a transportation bill will not only harm our economic competitiveness, it will impair the ability of states, counties, cities and transit systems to reduce our dependence on foreign oil and reduce transportation-related emissions. Without a new authorization bill, expanding access to transportation choices like public transportation that reduce emissions and modernizing our highways and infrastructure simply cannot occur. The transportation sector accounts for 70 percent of domestic oil consumption and one-third of carbon pollution.

New fees placed on transportation fuels should be dedicated to the Highway Trust Fund and invested along with other surface transportation funds under a multi-year highway and transit authorization bill. Increasing the availability of funds for transportation would help address transportation infrastructure investment needs and expand access to public transportation and other fuel-saving transportation improvements. We hope to work with you to develop climate and energy legislation that benefits the environment, as well as our economy, our workers and the surface transportation infrastructure on which we all rely.

Sincerely,

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)  
American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA)  
American Public Transportation Association (APTA)  
Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU)  
America Bikes  
American Concrete Pavement Association (ACPA)  
American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC)  
American Highway Users Alliance  
American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)  
American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA)  
American Trucking Associations (ATA)  
Associated Equipment Distributors (AED)  
Associated General Contractors of America (AGC)  
Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT)  
Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM)  
Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO)  
International Union of Operating Engineers  
Laborers' International Union of North America (LiUNA!)  
League of American Bicyclists  
National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA)

National Association of Counties (NACo)  
 National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)  
 National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA)  
 New Starts Working Group  
 Safe Routes to School National Partnership  
 Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO  
 United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America

Cc:  
 Chairman Max Baucus  
 Chairman Barbara Boxer  
 Chairman Christopher Dodd  
 Ranking Member Chuck Grassley  
 Ranking Member James Inhofe  
 Ranking Member Richard Shelby



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International  
Union of  
North America

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Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

