



March 9, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We the undersigned are groups that represent the transportation interests of the United States.

First, we want to congratulate you on your assuming the presidency and convey our appreciation for your expressed support for significantly increased investment in transportation infrastructure.

Given that support, we were dismayed to learn that the budget you sent to Congress this past week would undermine the very fabric of the financing mechanisms that support these investments. By proposing a budget scorekeeping change that would eliminate contract authority, your budget would have a devastating impact on transportation financing, and consequently transportation investment.

To be clear, what distinguishes transportation trust fund financed programs from others is the linkage to dedicated user fees, first enacted in 1956 for highways and later extended to transit and aviation with the ability to use contract authority. The predictability that contract authority provides is essential for states and local governments to make long term commitments to major transportation investment projects. In 1998 with the passage of the TEA 21 legislation, Congress recognized this unique budget situation and established funding guarantees tied to the trust funds.

By subjecting long term transportation investment to the vagaries of the annual appropriations process, the proposed scorekeeping change strikes at the heart of the job

creation goals you have set for these programs by undermining the ability to make multiyear commitments.

As you have stated Mr. President, we need to make the critical investments in America, and to create and sustain jobs as part of the economic recovery initiatives. Your reconsideration of this ill-advised budget scorekeeping change is essential to achieving our mutual goals.

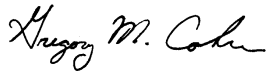
Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working with your administration to move the nation's economy forward.

Sincerely,



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John Horsley  
Executive Director  
American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials



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Gregory M. Cohen  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
American Highway Users Alliance



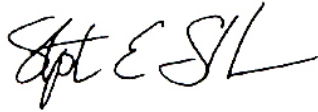
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T. Peter Ruane  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
American Road & Transportation Builders Association



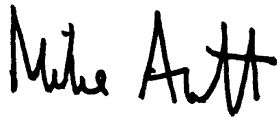
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Bill Graves  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
American Trucking Associations, Inc.



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Stephen E. Sandherr  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Associated General Contractors of America



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Mike Acott  
President  
National Asphalt Pavement Association



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Jennifer Joy Wilson  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association



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Janet Kavinsky  
Director, Transportation Infrastructure  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce