



National Association of Regional Councils

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June 19, 2007

The Honorable James Oberstar
Chairman
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John L. Mica
Ranking Member
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica:

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), representing regional planning and development organizations, which are comprised of local governments and are governed by local elected officials, supports H.R. 2701, the Energy Security and Climate change Mitigation Act of 2007. We commend your dedication and leadership in addressing energy security and finding ways to mitigate the effects of climate change.

In addition to supporting energy efficiency and alternative fuels programs that are being set before the Committee, there are specific provisions with direct impacts on regional governments that we would like to call to your attention. NARC strongly supports section 252 to outline a balanced distribution of rescissions of state highway funds. States should not have the authority to decide from which programs to rescind funds. History has shown that when states have this type of rescission authority, STP and CMAQ funds are usually the first and hardest hit by rescissions.

NARC opposes proposed amendments that allow the use of CMAQ funds for new highway capacity and require that diesel retrofits be given first priority in the project selection process for CMAQ funds, which would ultimately take away authority from local governments and lessen options for transportation solutions.

NARC supports Section 251 to allow a 100 percent federal share for CMAQ funded projects. It is our belief that this provision would provide incentives for state, regional and local governments to be innovative in their approaches to become more energy efficient.

Thank you for your consideration of NARC's positions. NARC offers its assistance for any transportation-related issue that might arise. We thank you for your efforts and look forward to working with you. Feel free to contact me at any time at 202.986.1032, x.213 or cmoore@narc.org. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Cameron Moore
Executive Director