

September 28, 2017

Chairman Thad Cochran
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Vice Chairman Patrick Leahy
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-148A, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Chairman Susan Collins
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development
186 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Jack Reed
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development
128 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairman Collins, and Ranking Member Reed:

The Local Officials in Transportation (LOT) Coalition thanks you for your hard work on advancing the fiscal year 2018 (FY18) Transportation, HUD (THUD) Appropriations bill. We appreciate your adherence to the Highway Trust Fund levels consistent with the FAST Act, providing more than \$2 billion for the Capital Investments Grants (CIG) program, and new funding for the TIGER program.

We also thank you for NOT including a rescission of contract authority as was done in the House of Representatives-passed FY18 THUD appropriations bill. The House bill rescinds \$800 million in highway contract authority balances previously apportioned to the States. This rescission provision was amended on the House floor, striking language that has been included for many years to protect modest federal funding commitments to both safety programs and local governments (e.g. funds suballocated to local areas within states). Further, the amendment strikes language included in last year's appropriations bill that requires each state to apply the rescission proportionately amongst available program balances.

In short, the amendment allows State DOTs the broadest discretion to pick and choose the programs from which to take their share of the rescission, including the only source of program funding that is committed by law to local areas and important to local efforts in advancing regional priorities. The language also puts at risk important safety programs.

Further, this \$800 million rescission combined with last year's \$857 million rescission and the \$7.569 billion rescission at the end of the FAST Act will potentially force States and local governments to cut actual highway expenditures. We agree that rescissions can limit the ability to program federal funds across many categories of the federal highway program and disrupt highway project planning efforts by State DOTs and regional and local agencies. At a time when Congress and the Administration are touting the benefits of investing in infrastructure, these rescissions send the exact opposite message.



As representatives of local governments, we strongly urge you to reject the House rescission provision outright. That said, if you must agree to a rescission as part of a final agreement, we would strongly encourage you to include the historic protections that have been a feature of previous bills and affirmed in the most recent surface transportation reauthorization (FAST Act).

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



DeLania Hardy
Executive Director
Association of Metropolitan
Planning Organizations



Matthew Chase
Executive Director
National Association
of Counties



Joe McKinney
Executive Director
National Association
of Development Organizations



Clarence E. Anthony
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National Associations of
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Tom Cochran
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