



September 9, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510



Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leaders McCarthy and Schumer:

America's transportation networks are essential to the nation's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, yet the future of federal transportation programs is currently uncertain. On September 30th, the federal surface transportation law, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, expires and immediate Congressional action is needed to keep projects moving. **The COVID-19 pandemic has created fiscal strain at the local level with billions in estimated lost revenue for city and county governments, and the uncertainty of the federal share of transportation funding only adds to this burden.** We write to you today to request that you pass the following legislative items this September:

**Pass Essential Coronavirus Relief Legislation** – As the country continues to battle the devastating health and economic impacts of the this pandemic, emergency stabilization funding to local governments is essential to shore up a wide range of services and programs that will support an economic rebound. Robust funding to stabilize local budgets must be the highest priority of the next coronavirus relief legislation.

Additionally, to the extent that funding is also provided for more targeted purposes, such as surface transportation, specifically we request additional highway funding be allocated by formula to local areas of all sizes using the suballocation features of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program and additional transit funds be provided to transit providers to ensure local investment in these systems is preserved. Local governments spend the majority of their budgets on infrastructure and workforce, and Congress must act swiftly before more cutbacks at the local level force the cancelation of capital projects and construction contracts. Already, 65% of cities surveyed are reporting that capital and infrastructure cuts may be needed to balance their budgets.

**Extend Surface Transportation Authorization** – We request that Congress extend the FAST Act for one year based on Division A of H.R. 2 which includes increased funding levels for fiscal year 2021 and allows for a 100% federal share of eligible project costs. An extension must also keep the Highway Trust Fund solvent and not differentiate among programs unnecessarily.

**Extend Administrative Planning Deadlines** – Additionally, we recommend Congress amend 23 U.S.C. and 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 to extend the statutory approval deadlines for documents such as long-range transportation plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, the Unified Public Work Program, FTA triennial reviews, quadrennial certifications, invoice processing, and other



relevant deadlines that occur during fiscal years 2020 and 2021 and provide up to one year after the National Emergency Declaration is lifted for compliance.

Transportation investments are proven to promote economic growth, create jobs, and help prepare communities for a safer future. Passing both COVID-19 relief and a FAST Act extension will infuse certainty into the process and the market. We look forward to working with you to support transportation investments that create jobs and facilitate economic recovery and in communities across the country during this critical time.

Sincerely,



Bill Keyrouze  
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  
CEO & Executive Director  
National League  
of Cities



Leslie Wollack  
Executive Director  
National Association  
of Regional Councils



Tom Cochran  
CEO & Executive Director  
The United States  
Conference of Mayors

CC: Senator Barrasso

Senator Wicker

Senator Crapo

Senator Grassley

Representative DeFazio

Representative Neal