



July 24, 2018

Chairman Richard Shelby
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Chairman Rodney Frelinghuysen
House Committee on Appropriations
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Vice Chairman Patrick Leahy
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member Nita Lowey
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Susan Collins
Senate Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development, & Related Agencies
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Chairman Mario Diaz-Balart
House Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development, & Related Agencies
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Jack Reed
Senate Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development, & Related Agencies
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Ranking Member David Price
House Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development, & Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

On behalf of the local government community and its elected and appointed transportation officials, we are writing to express our strong support for a Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, & Related Agencies (THUD) appropriations bill for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 that provides the highest funding levels for transportation programs. We were pleased that last year Congress increased infrastructure spending, provided record levels of discretionary funding for transportation programs, and met the obligation limitation for highways and transit established in the FAST Act. Thank you for your commitment to investing in the nation's infrastructure. As the Senate prepares to move on a bill, we wanted to take this opportunity to ask that you continue your commitment to maximize transportation investments and increase funding at or above the FY 2018 levels.

Our organizations, collectively the Local Officials in Transportation (LOT) Coalition, represent a diverse group of local officials that are responsible for planning and implementing transportation programs and projects and leveraging federal transportation investments with our local partners to keep the nation's robust transportation network moving. We represent communities – urban and rural, large and small – across the country. In partnership with Congress, states, and other Federal agencies, the LOT Coalition's members have long advocated for increasing federal investments in transportation to meet the growing needs across the country. Meeting these needs requires a strong partnership between all levels of government. As you know, these transportation investments support well-paid jobs, increase safety, advance technology, generate economic activity, and make our country more competitive in the global economy.



As you consider the FY 2019 THUD appropriations bill we would like to offer our support for specific program funding levels:

- We were pleased with the increase in FY 2018 for the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) and support further increasing STBGP to \$3.7655 billion in FY 2019 as the House bill contains. Further, we request that you increase local spending flexibility by removing the restriction on how the additional general fund appropriations for highways can be invested. Both chambers' FY 2019 bills limit the expenditure of STBGP funds to highways, bridges, and tunnels under 23USC, Section 133. The STBGP provides state and local governments a great degree of flexibility in how investments are made depending on their needs. We request the final conference report provide similar flexibility on how these additional appropriate funds can be used.
- We were disappointed that the House and Senate bills reduced funding for both the FTA Capital investments program and the additional general funding for the FTA Formula Grants. Investments in public transportation have demonstrated impacts on reducing congestion, improving air quality, and offering more mobility choices to the public. Therefore, we request, at a minimum, the FY 2019 THUD Conference Report restore the FTA levels back to FY 2018 levels; we would, however, prefer a funding increase above the FY 2018 levels.
- Lastly, we request the FY 2019 THUD Conference Report provide at least the \$1.5 billion for the National Infrastructure Investments grants appropriated in the FY 2018 THUD Conference Report. BUILD/TIGER grants offer state and local applicants an opportunity to work with the federal government to invest in many different types of transportation infrastructure projects that deliver measurable benefits to the users of the transportation network.

Again, thank you for your commitment to investing in our nation's transportation system. The LOT Coalition respectfully requests that the conference report on THUD provides for the highest level of funding in each of the House and Senate bills. Please feel free to contact any of our organizations should you have questions or comments on the 2019 THUD Appropriations.

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
CEO & Executive Director
National League
of Cities



Leslie Wollack
Executive Director
National Associations of
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Tom Cochran
CEO & Executive Director
The United States
Conference of Mayors