



June 29, 2009

U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

We are writing to support the Clean Low-Emission Affordable New Transportation Efficiency Act (CLEAN-TEA), S. 575, and to urge you to cosponsor this important, forward-thinking legislation. Transportation for America is a new, diverse coalition of more than 300 organizations throughout the country dedicated to bringing our transportation policy into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and we believe that CLEAN-TEA is an important step towards a more sustainable transportation future. We also believe that this legislation will help to ensure that federal climate and transportation policies operate on parallel instead of conflicting paths.

S. 575 complements vital efforts to adopt a comprehensive cap on greenhouse gases by ensuring that states and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) have the framework and resources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector. CLEAN-TEA would set aside 10 percent of the revenues raised by this type of legislation to help states and regions develop and implement plans to provide transportation alternatives that reduce vehicle miles traveled and save people money at the gas pump.

According to a recent report from the Center for Clean Air Policy (CCAP), smart growth best practices and improved transportation choices could significantly reduce transportation emissions at a negative cost per ton, when factoring in community-wide savings like avoided infrastructure costs, consumer fuel and insurance cost savings and projected tax revenue growth from high value economic development. The new CCAP study shows that these policies can reduce the amount Americans need to drive — as measured in vehicle miles traveled— by 10 percent per capita annually from 2005 levels. A 10 percent reduction in per capita VMT would reduce annual transportation emissions by 145 million metric tons of carbon dioxide (MMT $\text{CO}_2$ ) in the year 2030, equivalent to the annual emissions of about 30 million cars or 35 large coal plants.

Reducing oil consumption and emissions in the transportation sector is integral to climate and energy policy. Transportation is responsible for a third of America's carbon dioxide emissions ( $\text{CO}_2$ ), making it the nation's second largest source, and this sector consumes more than 70 percent of our country's oil. Expanding opportunities for Americans to accomplish more in their daily lives while driving fewer miles and for businesses to ship their goods using much less energy is one of the most cost-effective ways to cut greenhouse gas emissions and our country's oil dependence.

Many Americans live in communities that lack convenient and reliable access to public transportation or walking and bicycling facilities. This situation persists despite unprecedented demand for more walkable communities with better transportation choices. Fewer than 5 percent of Americans live within walking distance of a transit stop;

however, of those who do, 33 percent regularly use public transportation and 44 percent regularly travel by walking or biking. Lacking more affordable options, families are being squeezed by transportation costs, which are now the second largest average expense after housing, consuming 18 percent of household income on average.

Additionally, utilizing more of our railroad capacity to move people and goods offers the nation a simple, inexpensive, and immediate way to reduce GHG emissions without harming the economy. For example, switching just 10 percent of freight currently moved by highway to rail would save the nation one billion gallons of fuel a year and reduce GHG emissions by 12 million tons, according to the American Association of Railroads.

CLEAN-TEA would not only boost investment in transit, rail, and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, but also would provide resources and a framework for regions and states to develop plans to reduce greenhouse gases from the transportation sector. Such plans, already in use in regions such as Sacramento, CA and Salt Lake City, UT, can help maximize cost-effective and sustainable greenhouse gas reductions. For example, in Sacramento, the Metropolitan Planning Organization conducted a blueprint planning process that compared a business-as-usual 2035 plan to one that prioritized investments in public transportation and more compact, walkable development. The latter plan, which has been adopted by this six-county region, projects GHG savings of 7.2 MMT CO<sub>2</sub> by 2050, while saving \$9 billion in infrastructure costs and \$380 million in annual consumer fuel costs, yielding a net economic benefit of almost \$200 per ton of CO<sub>2</sub> saved. Similar opportunities exist in every state in the nation for both short and longer term GHG reductions through smarter transportation plans and programs.

We encourage your co-sponsorship of CLEAN-TEA and your support for related comprehensive climate legislation. We look forward to working with you with to build a more sustainable, energy-efficient transportation future for the U.S.

Sincerely,

2020 Vision  
Active Transportation Alliance  
America 2050  
American Institute of Architects  
American Planning Association  
American Planning Association (Indiana Chapter)  
American Public Health Association  
Anchorage Citizens' Coalition  
Atlanta Bicycle Coalition  
Bike, Walk Ohio  
BikeSage  
Breathe California  
Center for Neighborhood Technology  
CEO's for Cities  
Colorado Environmental Coalition  
Congress for the New Urbanism  
Congress for the New Urbanism (DC Chapter)

Conservation Alabama Foundation  
Conservation Law Foundation  
Deputy Speaker David McCluskey, (Connecticut House of Representatives)  
Environment America  
Environmental Defense Fund  
Greenbelt Alliance  
Green Wheels  
Hoosier Environmental Council  
Houston Tomorrow  
Idaho Smart Growth  
Institute of Transportation Engineers  
King County Executive Ron Sims  
Livable Communities Coalition  
LOCUS; Responsible Real Estate Developers and Investors  
Metro Council (Portland)  
Michigan Environmental Council  
Missouri Bicycle Federation  
National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations  
National Association of City Transportation Officials  
National Association of Railroad Passengers  
National Center for Bicycling and Walking  
National Complete Streets Coalition  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
New Belgium Brewing Company  
New England Regional Rail Coalition  
North Carolina Alliance for Transportation Reform  
Pioneer Valley Advocates for Commuter Rail  
Project for Public Spaces  
Rails to Trails Conservancy  
Reconnecting America  
Regional Plan Association  
Rep. Joe Mioli (Connecticut General Assembly)  
Rep. Kim Fawcett (Connecticut General Assembly)  
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District  
Safe Routes to School National Partnership  
San Francisco Bicycle Coalition  
Smart Growth America  
Surface Transportation Policy Project  
The Transit Coalition  
Town Center Area CID  
Train Riders Association of California  
Transportation Equity Network  
Transportation for America