Dear Representatives Mica, Rahall, Duncan, and DeFazio,

We write to you today specifically to request that you preserve the valuable local input in transportation planning that is provided by all existing metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). As you move forward with the reauthorization of surface transportation legislation, we ask that you include a provision to allow all existing MPOs, regardless of changes you may make to the population thresholds that determine when an MPO is designated, to continue to operate unless the MPO decides to change its designated status under law.

Our country’s transportation system is vital to the economic prosperity of the United States and a crucial component to our ability to compete in this global economy. Moving people and products across the country, to and from rural areas, and within our cities is how our country achieved greatness and will continue to do so in the future. Planning how our future transportation network will operate and be built, from our largest cities to our smallest communities, is dependent upon the hard work and dedication of transportation planners at all levels of government. In many respects, transportation planning is a bottom up process that begins at the local level in some of our smallest urban areas and rural communities. The involvement and effort of local and regional transportation planning is where our country begins to define how the larger network connects people to jobs, how commerce will move throughout our country, and links all sectors of the economy. The input at the local level involves numerous interested parties and stakeholders that will impact local, regional, and state decisions as to how and where transportation investments - taxpayer dollars - will be made. It is imperative that this local and regional forum be maintained and not eliminated in favor of a top down approach.
Again, as you and your colleagues on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee continue to debate the future of our surface transportation infrastructure system, we request that the legislation specifically includes language to preserve all existing designated metropolitan planning organizations. Thank you for your consideration of this important subject.

Sincerely,

LOIS CAPPS  
Member of Congress

JIM COSTA  
Member of Congress

RANDALL M. HULTGREN  
Member of Congress

JOHN GARAMENDI  
Member of Congress

DEVIN NUNES  
Member of Congress

BILL HUIZENGA  
Member of Congress

DON YOUNG  
Member of Congress

TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON  
Member of Congress

DENNIS A. CARDOZA  
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REID J. RIBBLE  
Member of Congress