

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 26, 2012

The Honorable John Mica
Chairman
House Transportation and Infrastructure
Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Duncan
Chairman
House Subcommittee on Highways and
Transit
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nick Rahall
Ranking Member
House Transportation and Infrastructure
Committee
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member
House Subcommittee on Highways and
Transit
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

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.

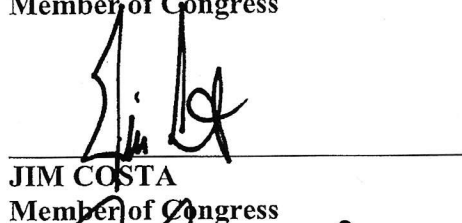
Sincerely,



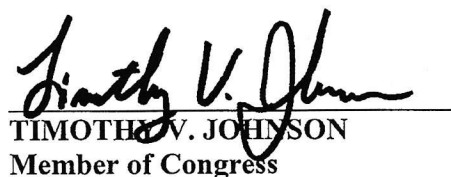
LOIS CAPPS
Member of Congress



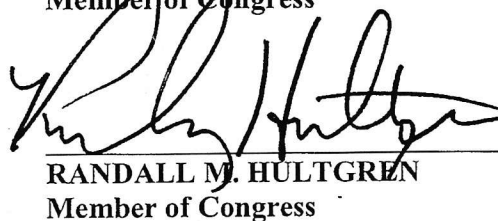
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Member of Congress



JIM COSTA
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TIMOTHY W. JOHNSON
Member of Congress



RANDALL M. HULTGREN
Member of Congress



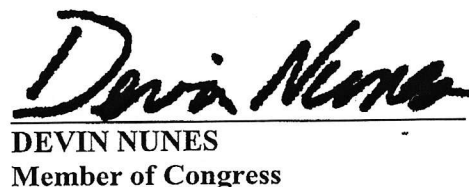
DENNIS A. CARDOZA
Member of Congress



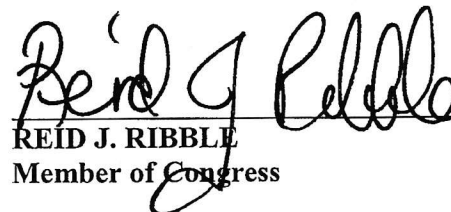
JOHN GARAMENDI
Member of Congress



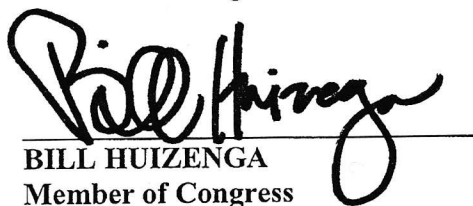
JEFF DEHAM
Member of Congress



DEVIN NUNES
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress