

North American Concrete Alliance

June 16, 2020

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves,

Thank you for moving forward with a highway reauthorization bill. Investment in America's infrastructure is long overdue, and it is critical to pass a highway reauthorization bill before the end of the fiscal year. Similarly, as America recovers from the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic, a highway reauthorization bill would aid in long-term economic recovery. We applaud the Committee's action to move forward.

The North American Concrete Alliance (NACA) is a coalition of 12 concrete-related trade associations that provide construction materials and equipment essential for America's transportation and infrastructure. Our industry supports hundreds of thousands of workers in well-paying American jobs, and we strongly support increased investment in the nation's infrastructure.

NACA is very appreciative of the robust funding levels in the bill including \$319 billion for highways that offers a 42 percent increase over FAST Act levels. Additionally, one hundred percent federal cost share for the first year coupled with the five years of certainty offered by the bill will allow for stability within many transportation industries and State DOTs. In conjunction with these higher spending limits, we urge the Committee to work with the Ways and Means Committee to find a sustainable, long-term funding source for the Highway Trust Fund.

NACA also supports the legislation's investment in America's bridges. The American Road and Transportation Builders Association reports that there are 178 million daily crossings of 46,100 structurally deficient bridges. Many of our members operate heavy trucks, and defective bridges can force costly rerouting. Dedicating significant resources to repairing and replacing our nation's bridges is necessary and long overdue.

Additionally, we support resilient construction with durable and resilient materials to withstand natural disasters. Provisions that incentivize stronger construction and prepare communities for natural disasters and the impacts of climate change, such as ensuring that communities have access to dependable evacuation routes, are critical to our nation's resilience.

We are heartened by the inclusion of these provisions, but we also have concerns about other provisions of the legislation.

While we are supportive of efforts to promote the resiliency of our infrastructure, the bill's emphasis solely on nature-based infrastructure is troubling. While we recognize that there are opportunities to integrate green infrastructure with traditional gray infrastructure, science and engineering must determine the materials and techniques best able to mitigate risk. As such, NACA does not support material preference policies that curtail the decision making or discretion of engineers.

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It is NACA's position that the many sustainability and resilience benefits of concrete should be considered fully when deciding how to best mitigate risks and save lives.

NACA urges the Committee to support an incentive-based approach to curbing carbon emissions and greenhouse gasses. Grant programs that incentivize industries to invest in reducing their carbon footprint support the efforts that our industry is already undertaking to produce low, zero and even negative carbon products.

We urge the committee to reconsider the INVEST Act's proposal to suspend the recent Hours of Service rulemaking from the Federal Motor Carriers Safety Administration (FMCSA). Our members operate within a limited geographic area and should not be regulated with the same rules as long-haul truckers. The recent rulemaking from FMCSA recognizes this and extends limited, common sense exemptions to our industry.

As the Committee approaches markup of a highway reauthorization bill, we remain hopeful that the Committee can take action and produce a bipartisan highway reauthorization for the sake of our nation's infrastructure. NACA members are eager to work with the committee as the process moves forward. We are here to serve as a resource for you and look forward to working together to get bipartisan legislation enacted this summer.

Again, we thank you for taking up the important work of reauthorizing America's highway transportation programs.

Sincerely,

American Concrete Pavement Association
American Concrete Pipe Association
American Concrete Pressure Pipe Association
American Concrete Pumping Association
Concrete Foundations Association
Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute

National Concrete Masonry Association
National Precast Concrete Association
National Ready Mixed Concrete Association
Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute
Portland Cement Association
Tilt-Up Concrete Association