

City of Corpus Christi

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*Moving
Corpus Christi
Forward
¡Adelante!*

October 20, 2015

The Honorable Bill Shuster, Chairman
Transportation & Infrastructure Committee
United States House of Representatives
2251 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Shuster,

As mayors from all corners of the nation, we urge you to significantly increase transit, highway and safety program commitments to cities and their regions, and provide six years of funding certainty in the MAP-21 surface transportation reauthorization. America's economic strength depends upon our cities, towns, and suburbs having the transportation networks they need to attract and retain businesses and provide opportunities for residents to prosper.

Mayors know firsthand the benefits of a well-functioning transportation network and the danger of underinvestment. Crumbling roads and failing transit systems translate to gridlock and constrained growth. Businesses face declines in productivity, seniors cannot make doctor's appointments and commuters are late to work. Worse, some jobs are left unfilled as workers are left without adequate transportation options to access employment.

This is not a partisan issue. Deficient bridges exist in red and blue districts all across this country. Many city and state leaders, Democrats and Republicans, are already stepping up and committing more local funds. However, without a strong federal partner, the twin demands of maintaining existing infrastructure and preparing for the future are beyond the means of any city.

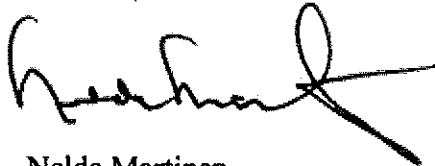
Current federal commitments are insufficient to maintain, much less enhance, our transportation network. Throughout our nation, public transit maintenance needs exceed \$86 billion and the highway and bridge repair backlog is an estimated \$808 billion. Yet, since 2009, federal surface transportation commitments have remained stagnant. In addition, shorter term two or three year transportation authorizations and patches create uncertainty and increase risk, further increasing project costs. We simply cannot afford continued extensions of the status quo.

Our nation's cities need a six year transportation authorization renewal that significantly increases investment in our system and directs more resources to cities and metropolitan regions. We commend Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Boxer, and the full Senate Environment and Public Works committee for unanimously passing a bipartisan six year transportation bill with increased funding out of the committee last month. We urge your respective committees to

make significant progress on this effort in a timely manner. Without it, we risk reducing national productivity and competitiveness relative to our global competitors. Congestion costs the U.S. economy over \$120 billion each year. Since the last long-term surface transportation bill was enacted in 2005, the economic competitiveness of U.S. transportation infrastructure has fallen from first in the world to 12th. If the status quo continues, deficient transportation infrastructure will cost American businesses \$430 billion by 2020.

Our nation's urban areas house more than 80 percent of our nation's residents, and if we are to thrive, Congress must step up and make investments in our cities, towns, and suburbs. We appreciate your action as we work together to meet the long-term transportation infrastructure needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nelda Martinez', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nelda Martinez
Mayor, Corpus Christi, TX

CC: The Honorable James Inhofe
The Honorable Barbara Boxer
The Honorable Bill Shuster
The Honorable Peter DeFazio
The Honorable Richard Shelby
The Honorable Sherrod Brown
The Honorable John Thune
The Honorable Bill Nelson