



# LIUNA!

June 16, 2020

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The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
Chairman  
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Ranking Minority Member  
House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves:

On behalf of the more than 500,000 members of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), I write to encourage the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to complete its consideration of the Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation (INVEST) in America Act and to move it to the House Floor for passage. With the current Surface Transportation Act authorizations set to expire on September 30, LIUNA urges members of the Committee to support the legislation which would allow these vital programs to continue without interruption.

The INVEST in America Act contains many commendable provisions including a substantial funding increase for all surface transportation programs. The five (5) year, nearly \$500 billion bill includes a thirty-one percent (31%) increase in Federal-aid Highway Program funding (\$47.1 billion in FY 2020 to \$69.1 billion in FY 2021), while also recognizing the state DOTs' need for COVID-19 relief in FY 2021 by delaying new programs and new requirements for the first year. Transformational levels of investments into all forms of infrastructure are more essential now than ever before; however, LIUNA is concerned that without a clear picture of what the U.S. economy is going to look like in a post COVID-19 world, it is not the time for new constrictive policy changes.

The INVEST in America Act preserves important worker protections that help assure that the economic benefits of the legislation will be broadly shared within local communities. Additionally, the bill incorporates a proposal by Representative Finkenauer that seeks to prevent the practice of using "fund swaps" to circumvent Davis-Bacon laws that assure workers are paid the local prevailing wage. LIUNA supports this provision and commends its inclusion in the legislation.

*Feel the Power*

However, LIUNA is concerned about other aspects of the legislation that we would hope would be amended as the process moves forward. The bill does not address problematic delays in the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), and other permitting processes, and it places further restrictions on construction of new infrastructure capacity, further limiting the beneficial impact of transportation infrastructure investments. LIUNA is also concerned about new stresses on the already strained Federal-aid Highway Program without any seemingly realistic approach being discussed in Congress about how to fund these investments.

LIUNA encourages members of both parties to come together to craft a transportation infrastructure package that meets the mobility need of our great nation. It is often said that there are no Democratic or Republican bridges . . . only failing bridges. We congratulate the committee on reaching this important milestone, and we look forward to working with Congress and infrastructure stakeholders to see a robust reauthorization of important transportation programs before they expire at the end of September.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,



TERRY O'SULLIVAN  
General President

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