

June 17, 2020

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

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Ranking Member  
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee  
2164 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves:

The cement industry appreciates the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee moving a long-term reauthorization of the surface transportation program through committee. However, we are disappointed the two sides could not work together to produce a bipartisan bill as is historically the tradition with legislation to reauthorize Federal surface transportation programs.

The Portland Cement Association (PCA), founded in 1916, is the premier policy, research, education, and market intelligence organization serving America's cement manufacturers. PCA members represent 93 percent of the United States' cement manufacturing production and have facilities in all 50 states. Cement and concrete product manufacturing, directly and indirectly, employs approximately 610,000 people across the country, and our collective industries contribute over \$125 billion to the U.S. economy. Portland cement is the fundamental ingredient in concrete. PCA promotes safety, sustainability, and innovation in all aspects of construction, fosters continuous improvement in cement manufacturing and distribution, and promotes sound infrastructure investment. Annually, the United States uses approximately 260 million cubic yards of concrete to build and repair its infrastructure.

Fundamentally, we can all agree that we can no longer afford to defer investment in the nation's surface transportation system to ensure the efficient and safe movement of goods and people. The introduction of two bills, the INVEST in America Act and the STARTER Act, shows each parties commitment to moving a multiyear reauthorization, however, it is unfortunate that a bipartisan compromise is not up for consideration. While each side may have different priorities, we believe that both bills create a foundation that could pave the way for a bipartisan reauthorization that increases investment, creates jobs, and rebuilds America's highways and transit systems.

To address the many years of underinvestment in our surface transportation system, the cement industry is pleased the INVEST in America Act calls for a \$319 billion investment in highways and bridges over the next five years. However, the cement industry is concerned that some of the changes made to the National Highway Performance Program will make it hard for states to add new capacity to address freight bottlenecks or invest in critical safety projects. The most cost effective and efficient means of improving freight movement and the safety of a road often includes adding additional capacity.

Across the country, one in three bridges are in need of repair or replacement. At the current rate of investment, it will take 50 years to fix all the nation's structurally deficient bridges. Recognizing that bridge investment must be prioritized, the cement industry supports the provisions included in the INVEST in America Act requiring states to invest additional funding in bridge repair and replacement. Additionally, the cement industry supports the provision included in the INVEST in America Act to streamline bridge project delivery by removing the prohibition against using multiple sources of Federal funding for one bundle of bridge projects. However, the cement industry is concerned the INVEST in America Act places too great of an emphasis on fix it first, which could come at the expense of some critical projects. For these reasons, we support the STARTER Act giving greater discretion to states in how they prioritize repair and new capacity projects.

Additionally, use of life-cycle cost analysis by states gives them a greater understanding of the full cost of a project and results in more accurate planning and cost decisions. By incorporating a life-cycle cost analysis into the design phase of a project, which takes into account factors like weather, traffic levels and maintenance levels, states can improve the performance of the roadway and reduce costs. This helps stretch each federal dollar invested in a transportation asset across the country. Chairman DeFazio frequently highlights the benefits of life-cycle cost analysis, and as Congress continues to work toward passage of a long-term surface transportation reauthorization, the cement industry hopes language can be added to encourage more states to utilize life-cycle cost analysis.

The cement industry is disappointed the INVEST in America Act does not take steps to make the federal permitting and environmental review process more efficient by enacting sensible reforms. Specifically, the cement industry supports Section 1201 of the STARTER Act to codify the President's One Federal Decision Executive Order. This Executive Order has taken important steps to streamline the project permitting process by placing timelines for government completion of environmental reviews and by consolidating the process across federal agencies.

The cement industry recognizes the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions related to transportation both in the manufacturing and the deployment phases. However, the cement industry is concerned that the INVEST in America Act does not capture the greenhouse gas emissions reductions potential in the use phase. The INVEST in America Act authorizes research focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions that come during the manufacturing and construction phase. We are disappointed the INVEST in America Act does not extend this research to the use phase. Additionally, where materials that reduce greenhouse gas emissions during manufacturing or construction are specifically highlighted as an eligible cost, the cement industry hopes the INVEST in America Act would extend these eligibilities to include greenhouse gas emissions reductions that come during the use of the bridge or road. There are characteristics of concrete and asphalt that can help reduce emissions related to transportation. For example, there are characteristics of different roads that can reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with driving over the surface related to pavement vehicle interaction. Additionally, we are pleased the INVEST in America Act reauthorizes the Accelerated Implementation and Deployment of Pavement Technologies program.

The cement industry appreciates that both the INVEST in America Act and the STARTER Act recognize the importance of improving the resiliency of the nation's infrastructure. If a surface transportation asset has been repeatedly damaged by a natural disaster or extreme weather, design standards should be established to ensure the asset is rebuilt to better withstand and return to operation should it be impacted by a similar event. Thus, design standards should be developed for projects built through a resiliency program to ensure they are appropriately resilient. Finally, the cement industry recognizes that both green and traditional infrastructure are used to improve the resiliency of our transportation assets. However, it is important that any policy to advance the resiliency of these assets allows engineers to make the decision about how to use traditional and, where appropriate, green infrastructure as opposed to dictating the use of green infrastructure.

Finally, the cement industry is concerned about advancing policies or studies on the procurement processes used by state departments of transportation to select construction materials for Federal-aid highway projects. The cement industry recognizes that different materials are better for different projects and regions of the country. However, we do not believe the Federal government should be mandating the material a state uses.

The cement industry appreciates the opportunity to share our perspective on the importance of passing a long-term bipartisan reauthorization of surface transportation programs. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at [soneill@cement.org](mailto:soneill@cement.org) or (703) 321-6792.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean O'Neill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "S" and "O".

Sean O'Neill  
Senior Vice-President, Government Affairs  
Portland Cement Association