



July 14, 2009

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
Chair  
Senate Environment and Public Works Committee  
112 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Boxer:

Let me first express our appreciation to you for your leadership in supporting initiatives – including the economic recovery legislation – to turn around the economy and create jobs. It is in this spirit that I write to convey our views regarding the Environment and Public Works Committee’s possible mark-up of an 18-month extension of federal surface transportation programs that expire September 30, 2009. On behalf of the affiliated unions of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), we are opposed to an extension that will effectively postpone authorization of this critically important legislation until at least the next Congress.

I understand the concerns that the surface transportation program must not be allowed to lapse and that a series of short-term extensions will not serve our transportation system. We share these concerns and have confidence that Congress and the President will take the actions necessary to ensure this does not happen. We also strongly support immediate action to replenish the shortfall in the Highway Trust Fund and urge Congress to complete this action before the August recess.

In our view an 18-month extension needlessly delays what our members and this country desperately need: a robust surface transportation reauthorization bill that creates and sustains millions of good jobs in the face of the worst economy since the Great Depression. Our members – whether they work in transit systems, transportation construction or state transportation departments – are suffering like never before. We simply cannot tell unemployed and underemployed transportation workers to wait two years or more for action on a crucial jobs bill that history shows will contribute to the economic recovery to which we are all committed.

**Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO**

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Edward Wytkind, President • Patricia Friend, Secretary-Treasurer

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It is critically important that Congress and the President advance a long-term reauthorization and not permit this legislation to become mired in endless delays. Our surface transportation system and infrastructure are in a state of disrepair and face monumental investment costs that cannot wait until 2011 or later. Moreover, with the historic role of this legislation in putting Americans to work in good jobs we would argue that now more than ever this legislation should be a top priority.

We look forward to working with you to fill the current shortfalls in the Highway Trust Fund and to pass a historic long-term surface transportation authorization bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Wytkind', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Edward Wytkind  
President

cc: Members of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee