



April 5, 2011

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-218, Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers:

On behalf of the nearly 1,500 member organizations of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), I write in opposition to the disproportionate cuts that have been directed at public transportation and passenger rail accounts within the one-week Continuing Resolution (CR) proposed by the House Appropriations Committee to fund federal programs through April 15. There is no legitimate rationale for the inequitable treatment of one mode of transportation over all others, especially when these general fund expenditures are good and necessary investments in the surface transportation infrastructure that will serve the nation for decades to come. These cuts are inconsistent with a tradition of bipartisan, multimodal, surface transportation policy.

The cuts to transit and rail programs in the newly proposed CR constitute almost 99 percent of the cuts to Department of Transportation programs. The cuts proposed to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Capital Investment Grants program will inhibit the ability of communities to plan for much needed transit projects by compromising the federal commitment to these projects. The cuts to high-speed and intercity passenger rail grants fail to recognize the promising mobility and economic benefits that these investments can bring to numerous corridors across the nation.

Additionally, separate cuts to the public transportation security grant program account for more than 30 percent of the cuts to transportation security programs. These grants are critical to transit agencies in meeting security improvement needs. Transit provides 18 times as many passenger trips as aviation, but aviation receives 12 times as much security funding as surface transportation security. Spending per passenger for transit security is 4 cents; for aviation it's \$8.67. Aviation security receives 215 times as much federal funding per passenger as transit. Threats to public transportation continue to exist and public transportation security investment should be increased, not decreased.

Transportation policy and capital investment funding decisions should be guided by the widely accepted facts on projected needs and current conditions. A multitude of commissions and panels of transportation experts have repeatedly validated the tremendous transportation investment needs we face. Infrastructure investment must continue despite economic downturns, as the nation must be prepared for economic and population growth projected in years ahead. Moreover, providing transportation systems that empower our citizens and communities with transportation alternatives is a necessary strategy for reducing our dependency on foreign oil, and mitigating the negative consequences that overseas turmoil can have on gas prices and personal mobility.

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Continued investment in public transportation and intercity passenger rail are critical elements of sound national transportation policy, as the majority of the nation's projected population growth will occur in urban and suburban centers. A continued commitment to federal investment also influences the willingness of private financial markets to fund public transportation projects and guarantees that bond ratings remain high, interest rates remain low.

We urge Congress to reconsider these cuts in light of the long-term need for investment that our nation faces as we continue to plan for a strong and secure economic future. Transportation options for all Americans are critical in this regard, and we look forward to working with you and the Congress in ensuring that these needs are addressed.

We thank you for considering APTA's views. If you have questions, please contact Brian Tynan of APTA's Government Affairs Department at (202) 496-4897 or email btynan@apta.com.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William Millar".

William Millar
President

WM/bmt