



April 1, 2009

The Honorable John Spratt  
Chairman  
Committee on the Budget  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt:

On behalf of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and its more than 1,400 member organizations, I write to express our support for the transportation investment provisions of the FY 2010 House Budget Resolution.

The Congress recently recognized the importance of investing in transportation infrastructure across this country through the passage and enactment of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. APTA appreciates congressional support for such investment and believes that the ARRA is a good start in the critical effort to improve mobility, restore and maintain our infrastructure and facilitate our nation's economic growth. While the ARRA is a good first step, Congress needs to continue to address our transportation infrastructure needs in the next multi-year surface transportation authorization bill. This budget resolution establishes a sound framework to do this.

We appreciate that the resolution "restored" the contract authority baseline to counter the large rescissions that would otherwise create an artificially low starting point for the next surface transportation bill. Second, the resolution includes a reserve fund for the next surface transportation authorization in order to provide the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee procedural flexibility under the budget to move forward with a new surface transportation bill. Obviously, we want to work with Congress to ensure that additional revenues are provided to fund transportation infrastructure needs. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the resolution preserved the current scorekeeping of contract authority programs.

The budgetary treatment of contract authority has been a critical component to the multi-year planning and financing needs of recipients of federal transportation funding. Transportation departments and transit agencies depend on the predictable funding that the current budgetary treatment of Transportation Trust Fund programs creates. Since the current budgetary framework was established under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA21) in 1998, APTA has argued for maintaining and even strengthening the guarantees and firewalls that have become such

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William W. Millar

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an important aspect of infrastructure finance. The unique budgetary treatment of transportation trust funds is what, in essence, makes the federal motor fuels excise taxes and other user fees truly dedicated financing mechanisms. This treatment of trust fund spending contributes to taxpayer confidence in the programs. It assures transportation users that the fees they pay to use the nation's transportation systems will finance future enhancements in that system.

On behalf of APTA and its members, I commend you on producing a budget document that will enable Congress to provide the transportation investments currently needed in communities across this nation. We urge all House members to support passage of this important measure.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William W. Millar". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "W" and a long, sweeping tail.

William W. Millar  
President

WWM/tjj