



April 24, 2009

The Honorable John Spratt  
Chairman  
House Committee on the Budget  
207 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Spratt:

On behalf of the nearly 1,500 members of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), I urge you to provide sufficient budget authority to allow for continued growth in the federal investment in the nation's surface transportation program as you work in conference to develop a compromise budget resolution. We also urge the conferees to adopt the House-passed language regarding the reserve fund that allows the Budget Committee to increase the budget baseline if the next surface transportation authorization legislation maintains a solvent Highway Trust Fund through 2015.

It is absolutely critical that the conference adopt the House-passed budget baseline level for surface transportation of \$324 billion for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 through FY 2015. The \$242 billion level approved in the Senate Budget resolution is entirely inadequate. Failure to adopt the House-passed level could have serious negative consequences in both the short and long term. If Congress is unable to enact a new authorization bill in this fiscal year, and a short term extension of current law is required, the Senate level of budget authority would not allow the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to sustain even current levels of transportation funding, and would require an increase in the motor fuels user fee to avoid cuts. In the long term, the Senate budget baseline level would seriously inhibit Congress' ability to enact levels of growth in the surface transportation program necessary to address our nation's infrastructure needs and produce the many national benefits that a strong transportation system provides.

At a time when our nation's transportation infrastructure requires increased funding to maintain and grow our systems, Congress should not unnecessarily limit federal investment. Public transportation ridership is at its highest level in 52 years, with 10.7 billion trips last year. For every one billion dollars invested in public transportation, 30,000 jobs are created or sustained. Public transportation already reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 37 million metric tons each year, and saves the United States the equivalent of 4.2 billion gallons of gasoline each year. To continue and expand these benefits that meet national policy goals, we strongly urge you to adopt the House-passed transportation budget baseline and reserve fund provisions.

Sincerely yours,

William M. Millar

WWM/tjj

Chair  
Beverly A. Scott

First Vice Chair  
Mattie P. Carter

Secretary-Treasurer  
Michael J. Scanlan

Immediate Past Chair  
Michael S. Townes

Vice Chairs  
Richard J. Bacigalupo  
Management and Finance  
J. Barry Barker  
Government Affairs  
Daran Barnes  
Human Resources  
Linda J. Bohlinger  
Research and Technology  
Flora M. Castillo  
Transit Board Members  
Thomas J. Costello  
Marketing and Communication  
Joyce Eleanor  
Bus and Paratransit Operation  
Sharon Greene  
Business Members  
Delan Hampton  
Business Member-at-Large  
Loren "Ben" Herr  
State Affairs  
Angela Iannuzziello  
Canadian Members  
Hugh A. Mose  
Small Operations  
David Solow  
Commuter and Intercity Rail  
Gary C. Thomas  
Rail Transit

President  
William W. Millar