



October 31, 2011

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hal Rogers  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
H-307, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
S-146A, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Norm Dicks  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Inouye, Ranking Member Cochran, Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Dicks:

On behalf of the 1,500 member organizations of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), I urge you to support strong investment in public transportation and high-speed and intercity passenger rail programs as you conduct conference negotiations on the Fiscal Year 2012 (FY12) Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Appropriations spending bill.

We recognize the challenges faced by the Appropriations Committees in crafting the FY12 THUD bill in the absence of a surface transportation authorization bill. With more Americans using public transportation, we urge the committees to recognize that tremendous funding needs persist for public transportation agencies across the country. Failure to make necessary investments may force private sector businesses in transit and related industries to lay off employees or to invest overseas. For the nation's tens of millions of transit riders, less investment will mean less service, fewer travel options, higher costs and longer commutes.

We strongly support providing funding at no less than \$10.629 billion for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs in Fiscal Year 2012, the level approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee. This amount includes \$8.361 billion for formula and bus grant programs. At minimum, APTA also strongly supports funding the New Starts Capital Investment Grant program at the Senate approved level of \$1.955 billion in FY 2012, which is a \$358 million increase over the FY 2011 level. The success of major, multi-year capital projects under this program depends upon predictable support by Congress and the FTA. Further, continued federal investment commitments influence decisions by private financial markets to fund public transportation projects and oftentimes result in favorable bond ratings and lowered interest rates.

We urge the conferees to support, at minimum, the Senate provided level of \$25 million for the FTA's greenhouse gas and energy reduction (TIGGER) grant program, \$550 million for National Infrastructure Investment (TIGER) grants, and \$90 million for HUD's Sustainable Communities Initiative, which supports the interagency partnership between DOT, HUD, and the Environmental Protection Agency. We also urge the conferees to support, at minimum, the House provided level of \$45 million for Research and University Research centers. These programs assist public transportation systems with addressing important needs and deserve the continued support of Congress.

APTA also strongly supports providing robust funding for high-speed and intercity passenger rail. Ridership on commuter and intercity passenger rail systems has been steadily growing. Despite the

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*President*  
William Millar

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nation's slow economy, Amtrak continues to experience record ridership, reporting a ridership increase of 5 percent in the last fiscal year for an overall ridership of more than 30.2 million passengers. The demand for high-speed rail also continues, with 32 states plus the District of Columbia forging ahead in planning and implementing rail improvements. Therefore, we urge the conferees to provide at least \$100 million to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for high-speed and intercity passenger rail grants to preserve and continue the work going on around the country, as well as at least \$936.8 million for Amtrak capital grants and \$544 million for Amtrak operating grants.

We also urge the conferees to provide funding to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for the Railroad Safety Technology Grants Program, which assists publicly funded commuter with implementing Positive Train Control technologies on their systems as required by the Rail Safety Improvement Act (RSIA) of 2008. Under RSIA, publicly funded commuter rail operators are required implement positive train control (PTC) systems by December 31, 2015. The cost of implementing PTC on public commuter railroads alone is estimated to exceed \$2 billion, which does not include costs associated with acquiring the necessary radio spectrum or the subsequent software and operating expenses. APTA urges the Committee to fully fund this program to ensure implementation of PTC on systems as required under RSIA.

It is more important than ever for the federal government to invest in its infrastructure to maintain economic competitiveness in the global economy. The direct result of strong transportation funding to the sustained economic growth and recovery of our nation has been proven time and time again. We urge the Conferees to support public transportation programs during conference negotiations and we look forward to working with you and your respective committees throughout this process.

Sincerely yours,

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

William Millar  
President