

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 19, 2015

The Honorable James Inhofe  
Chairman  
Committee on Environment  
and Public Works  
410 Dirksen SOB  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Shuster  
Chairman  
House Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure  
2251 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Environment  
and Public Works  
456 Dirksen SOB  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure  
2164 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Boxer, Chairman Shuster, and Ranking Member DeFazio:

Thank you for your leadership to enact long-term transportation reauthorization legislation. As you reconcile the differences between the Senate-passed Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy Act and the House-passed Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act, we would like to underscore the importance of certain provisions, aimed at encouraging travel infrastructure improvements, which we wish to be included in any final conference agreement.

Specifically, the House bill includes important policies to ensure federal, state, and local planning agencies consider strategies that promote tourism and improve traveler mobility when planning transportation projects. Section 1201(5)(A)(iii) and Section 1202(2)(A)(iii) add “travel and tourism” to the list of many factors that states and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) should consider when formulating their long-term transportation plans. Section 1201(4) encourages MPOs to include local travel leaders in the planning process, a practice that is already done in many of our communities. Finally, Section 1438 would establish a National Travel Infrastructure Strategy and Travel Infrastructure Advisory Committee at the Department of Transportation (DOT), tasked with providing advice and recommendations to the Secretary on intermodal transportation strategies to improve travel efficiency, safety and security, ultimately enhancing American travel and tourism opportunities. These provisions will help increase our nation’s capacity to accommodate additional domestic and international tourism.

It is estimated that in 2014, domestic and international travel in the United States generated over \$2.1 trillion in economic activity, resulting in over \$927.9 billion in direct travel expenditures and supporting nearly 15 million American jobs. As our local economies continue to see an increase

in travel and tourism, it is critical that federal transportation policies facilitate the improvement of travel infrastructure. To that end, we ask the conferees to accept these bipartisan provisions that will improve our nation's transportation system while facilitating additional economic growth resulting from travel and tourism.

Thank you for your time and your careful consideration of this request. We appreciate the opportunity to weigh in while conference negotiations are ongoing. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



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Dean Heller  
U.S. Senator



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Brian Schatz  
U.S. Senator