

June 16, 2005

The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2134 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative DeFazio:

We are pleased that you are serving on the conference committee for the reauthorization of surface transportation programs. As the House-Senate Conference Committee moves forward, the Lane Council of Governments in its role as the Central Lane MPO views key provisions of the Senate and House versions as important to continued regional planning, programming, and construction of crucial transportation projects. Our priorities are:

- Retain the Senate's metropolitan planning funding apportionment set-aside of 1.5 percent for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), and include capturing 1.5 percent of the "equity bonus" program.
- Retain the Senate's current air quality and conformity provisions, including:
  - Preserving Long-Term Transportation Planning and Transportation Improvement Program updates of every four (4) years in non-attainment areas and five (5) years for areas that have been designated as being in attainment.
  - Shorten Conformity horizons to 10 years.
- Retain and enhance funding in transit programs.
  - Maintain the 80/20 match.
  - Retain transit funding from the trust fund.

There is a concern in our region over MPO funding levels. Funding has remained constant for the past 20 years while additional MPOs have been designated (2 in Oregon since 2000, 47 nationwide), new responsibilities and regulations are placed on us, and unfunded mandates have increased. We are asking you to continue to support language that will increase the takedown for metropolitan planning from 1.0 percent to 1.5 percent and include the Senate's Equity Bonus program in the base against which the takedown is applied.

We ask you to "fix" air quality conformity provisions by giving us the freedom to clean our air by reducing bureaucratic and planning constraints, and better align the federal and state processes.

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We ask you to continue to support urban and rural transit systems and continue to provide stable funding at an equitable match to assist our commuter, elderly, disabled, youth, and other transit-dependent citizens.

We would like to express our gratitude for the set of significant transportation investments you have secured for Lane County, and the leadership you have shown in supporting the transportation needs here in the 4<sup>th</sup> District.

Sincerely,

Gary Williams, Chair  
Board of Directors

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