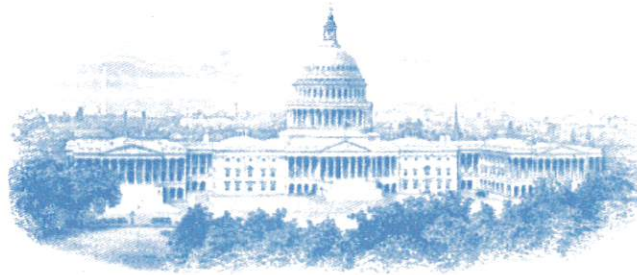


STEVE CHABOT
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
FIRST DISTRICT, OHIO

INCLUDES MOST OF HAMILTON COUNTY
AND ALL OF WARREN COUNTY

DEAN OF THE OHIO
REPUBLICAN DELEGATION



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 14, 2021

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves,

We are writing you today regarding important policies for the Surface Transportation Reauthorization bill. As you draft the bill, we urge you to consider policies that would focus on improving highway infrastructure for freight, commerce, and bridges.

Structures like the Brent Spence Bridge carry important regional and national freight daily. According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, "Productivity growth in freight transportation has long been a driving force for growth of U.S. overall productivity and contributed directly to the growth of the U.S. GDP." The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) calls freight transportation a "big part of the economy." The value generated by transportation services in moving goods and people through the transit network is about five percent of GDP. Yet, Federal transportation policy does not adequately direct the resources needed for safe and efficient movement of freight.

Prioritizing funding for infrastructure and bridge projects will have a broad and substantial economic impact by strengthening the nation's goods movement infrastructure. Ensuring a dedicated stream of funding for large and medium scale infrastructure projects is critical to U.S. productivity and global competitiveness, which is why we believe that it is imperative to include policies to fund these projects in a Surface Transportation Reauthorization bill.

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As you may know, throughout Southwest Ohio and Northern Kentucky, the I-75 and I-71 corridors are the backbone of our economy. The Brent Spence Bridge is a critical part of this commercial corridor, as it moves over \$417 billion in freight every year - equivalent to three percent of our country's GDP. It is projected to double by 2030 to over \$800 billion. The bridge currently operates at more than double its capacity on a daily basis, which poses a major safety risk and adds economic costs to the region and the nation from congestion and delayed delivery times. Sadly, the Brent Spence Bridge is now the second most congested major bridge in the nation. This project has been discussed for almost 20 years, and we believe it's past time to get the job done.

To help accomplish this goal, we submit the following policy proposals for consideration in the bill.

First, we support a continuation of the Projects of Regional and National Significance program. We believe that Congress should focus on pushing these larger projects forward as they have a greater impact on our nation's economy and face a more difficult financing challenge. As you contemplate additional considerations for the program, we request the inclusion of language for USDOT to give greater consideration to projects that carry two or more Federal highways between two states. These projects are critical to our regional and national economy as they move freight through crucial highway corridors.

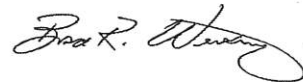
Our second proposal is the creation of a major bridge grant program. The Bridge Investment Act that was introduced by Senator Brown and several of his colleagues in the Senate, and Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney in the House, is a great starting point for such a program. A competitive grant program for bridges that cost over \$500 million is exactly what our Federal transportation dollars should help fund. Bridges of this size should be a national priority to fix and replace as these projects benefit everyone.

As you continue your work on legislation to reauthorize our surface transportation programs, we request that you consider these policy suggestions. Thank you for your continued work on these important issues.

Sincerely,



Steve Chabot
Member of Congress



Brad R. Wenstrup, D.P.M.
Member of Congress