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TRADE

Congressman Andy Levin

**Testimony for the Record: Members' Day Hearing of the House Committee
on Transportation and Infrastructure**

May 1, 2019

Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves: thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony as you begin crafting infrastructure legislation for America's future. On behalf of Michigan's Ninth Congressional District, I would like to highlight the need for investments in wastewater infrastructure projects that protect our water sources and roads; zero-net energy buildings; and electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.

Wastewater infrastructure projects

In 2017, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimated that approximately \$655 billion will be needed over a twenty-year period to meet our nation's drinking water and wastewater infrastructure needs.¹ Federal investment would help meet these needs, enable state and local governments to meet Clean Water Act treatment requirements, and, importantly, directly affect the integrity of our roads. According to the EPA, sanitary sewer overflows cost U.S. communities billions of dollars in clean-up and repair to damaged infrastructure, including roads.² This damage has tremendous implications for Michiganders: Michigan motorists pay \$14.1 billion every year in the forms of additional vehicle operating costs, congestion-related delays, and traffic crashes.³

In Michigan's Ninth District, the Chapaton Retention Basin is emblematic of the long-overdue need to invest in wastewater infrastructure to protect our water sources and roads. Chapaton is a 28-million-gallon Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Facility. It opened in 1968 and currently services Interstate 94 (I-94), businesses, and approximately 92,000 residents in Eastpointe, St. Clair Shores, and Roseville, Michigan. The Basin protects residents by moving storm water out of the community and into nearby Lake St. Clair, thereby preventing flooding. It also protects the environment. Storm water and sanitary sewage flow are held in the Basin during heavy rains and

¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). (2017). *Drinking Water and Infrastructure*.
<https://www.gao.gov/assets/690/687261.pdf>

² U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). (2003). *Why control sanitary sewer overflows*.
https://www3.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/sso_casestudy_control.pdf

³ TRIP. (2019). *Modernizing Michigan's Transportation System*.
http://www.tripnet.org/docs/MI_Progress_and_Challenges_TRIP_Report_March_2019.pdf

then re-diverted to sewage treatment. In the absence of much-needed expansion to this CSO, however, preventable sewage overflows have led to water quality problems that include E. coli pollution and have hastened the deterioration of essential roadways like I-94.

By investing in wastewater infrastructure projects, including through the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act program, we will simultaneously better protect our environment and forestall damage to critical roadways, thereby enhancing motorists' safety and helping drivers avoid unexpected costs.

Zero-net energy buildings

In its 2015 Quadrennial Technology Review, the U.S. Department of Energy found that the buildings sector accounts for about 76 percent of electricity use and 40 percent of all U.S. primary energy use and associated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.⁴ The report also found that the implementation of the best available energy efficiency technologies in the nation's current building stock would reduce commercial energy consumption by 46 percent and residential consumption by 50 percent.⁵

As a former clean energy entrepreneur, I have seen first-hand the potential to address our climate crisis through solutions that produce more efficient commercial and residential buildings while also spurring cost savings and job growth. I believe we must move much faster with respect to the efficiency of both current and new building infrastructure, which is why I support requiring that all new building be zero-net energy—i.e., new buildings should produce as much energy as they consume. To achieve this rapidly, we must invest in grant programs that establish or expand financing for energy efficiency retrofit projects. Such investments will help us reduce our carbon footprint, create jobs, and move towards a cleaner, more robust economy.

EV charging infrastructure

As our nation's transportation sector has become increasingly responsible for overall greenhouse gas emissions, plug-in EVs—which have 54 percent lower lifetime carbon pollution than conventional vehicles—can help us reduce emissions and move us closer to climate sustainability.^{6,7} EV charging needs will rise from 6 billion kWh in 2020 to 53 billion kWh in 2030, and the number of chargers needed is estimated to rise from 2 million in 2020 to 13 million in 2030.⁸

To encourage our country's needed shift to EVs, I have proposed the establishment of a network of EV charging stations along the National Highway System. I believe we need to lead the world

⁴ U.S. Department of Energy. (2015). An assessment of energy technologies and research opportunities. *Quadrennial Technology Review*. <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2017/03/f34/qtr-2015-chapter5.pdf>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). *Inventory of US Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks*. https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-01/documents/2018_complete_report.pdf

⁷ NRDC. *Electric Vehicles Can Dramatically Reduce Carbon Pollution from Transportation and Improve Air Quality*. <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/luke-tonachel/study-electric-vehicles-can-dramatically-reduce-carbon-pollution>

⁸ Ibid.

in protecting our environment, and that must include improving EV consumer experiences so that we may end our dependence on conventional vehicles. “Range anxiety,” charge times, and charging costs currently preclude the paradigm shift necessary for a sustainable automotive future. As such, I urge you to consider robust investments to make a national network of EV chargers a reality.

As Congress begins considering legislation to rehabilitate our nation’s infrastructure, I respectfully request that the Committee bear these three priorities in mind when determining an appropriate course of action that promotes sustainability for our communities and our environment.

Again, I thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with you.