



208 W 4th Street, Suite 3A
Austin TX 78701
info@walkaustintx.org

June 16, 2020

The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Chair, U.S. House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
The Honorable Sam Graves, Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Chair, Highways & Transit Subcommittee
The Honorable Rodney Davis, Ranking Member, Highways & Transit Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington D.C.

Dear Representatives DeFazio, Graves, Delegate Norton, and Representative Davis,

As the Board of Directors for Walk Austin, a 501c3 nonprofit that believes that all people deserve communities with safe, lively, and beautiful streets, it is our pleasure to express our support for the recent transportation bill, INVEST in America Act. We believe this bill provides an opportunity to effectively recalibrate the federal government's approach to providing a 21st century transportation system where all people have the ability to safely access multiple modes of viable transportation. America is largely a driving country; we must move quickly to a multimodal way of life.

Walk Austin strongly supports prioritizing transportation system maintenance and access over new construction projects and we urge you to further tighten the bill's language that ensures funds cannot be spent on new roadway construction before maintenance needs are met. This is particularly pertinent given that the American Society of Civil Engineers 2017 Infrastructure Report Card rated the nation's infrastructure system as a D+. Furthermore, there is now substantial evidence showing the positive correlation between speed, which expansion projects frequently increase, and traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Walk Austin supports this new direction of maintenance over expansion and we are excited to see our communities become safer through it.

Furthermore, the performance-based approach to transportation financing focusing primarily on outcomes equates to a merit-based system where the most effective projects are prioritized. Walk Austin affirms this approach as the most appropriate way to fund transportation projects. We believe this outcome-oriented approach will help create the communities that we desire and that we can all take part in.

Finally, the INVEST in America Act makes significant strides to elevate our nation's pursuit of social equity and the climate goals that have become more urgent every single day. This bill details a host of practical interventions that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our transportation system for *all users* and thereby contribute positively to the equity, economic, and environmental factors in our communities. Given this, we strongly support this bill.

Thank you for your work to provide a transportation system that will help make our communities more equitable, economically viable, and environmentally sustainable for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Zack Lofton
Board Member, Walk Austin