

Charles Crain
Managing Vice President, Policy

May 21, 2026

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen,

On behalf of the National Association of Manufacturers, I write in strong support of the BUILD America 250 Act. A robust, long-term surface transportation reauthorization bill is essential to providing the certainty manufacturers need to invest, plan, and compete in a rapidly evolving global economy.

The NAM is the voice of the manufacturing community and the leading advocate for a policy agenda that supports and empowers the 13 million people who make things in America. As the largest manufacturing association in the United States, the NAM's membership includes manufacturers of all sizes, across every industrial sector, and in all 50 states. Manufacturers collectively contribute \$2.9 trillion to the U.S. economy, and every sector of manufacturing depends on a safe, modern, and efficient transportation network to support communities and move raw materials, components, finished goods, and workers throughout the country.

The BUILD America 250 Act makes an important down payment on America's long-term economic competitiveness through robust investment in core infrastructure, freight mobility, safety, and supply chain reliability. It also represents tremendous progress toward comprehensive permitting reform. Manufacturers particularly appreciate the bill's strong emphasis on formula-based highway and bridge investment, multimodal freight connectivity, and long-term funding certainty.

Manufacturers commend the Committee's attention to, and prioritization of, funding and policy support in the following areas:

Highway Trust Fund

The Highway Trust Fund first became insolvent in 2008, and since that time, borrowing from General Revenue to fill gaps in needed transportation and infrastructure funding has grown. While each of the potential solutions for restoring solvency to the HTF offers unique opportunities and challenges, it is critical that this year's surface transportation reauthorization include a robust discussion around pay-fors and the future of the HTF.

The NAM appreciates the Committee's willingness to begin addressing long-term Highway Trust Fund sustainability through additional user-fee discussions, including efforts to ensure all roadway users contribute to the system. Manufacturers look forward to the opportunity to engage further on this topic to ensure parity among the system's users and long-term HTF fiscal sustainability.

Roads and Bridges

A significant portion of U.S. roads remain in poor or mediocre condition, and more than 46,000 bridges across the country are classified as structurally insufficient. Each year, manufacturers experience 65 million hours of freight delays due to inadequate infrastructure, which directly translates to a staggering congestion cost of \$25 billion per year.

The NAM strongly supports this bill's continued investment and focus on the core Federal Highway Administration formula grants, including the National Highway Performance Program, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, and Highway Safety Improvement Program. These programs are essential to delivering projects of national, regional, and state significance and to keeping people and goods moving throughout the country.

Manufacturers are particularly encouraged by the bill's historic investment in bridges and continued focus on modernizing critical freight and passenger corridors. Reliable bridge infrastructure is essential to supply chain efficiency, freight reliability, worker mobility, and economic competitiveness, and these investments will help strengthen the long-term resilience and safety of the national transportation network.

Freight Rail

Freight rail is key to supply chain efficiency, moving 1.6 billion tons of goods annually. Continued investment in freight rail and safety programs, including the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (CRISI), the Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program, and the Section 130 Railway-Highway Crossings Program are vital for enhancing grade crossing safety, improving reliability, modernizing aging infrastructure, and strengthening rail network efficiency.

Transit and Passenger Rail

Manufacturers strongly support the bill's \$87.6 billion in public transit investment through contract authority, alongside additional transit funding provided through other authorizing streams. Continued investment in public transit and passenger rail is critical to keeping workers and goods moving efficiently through major economic corridors, reducing congestion that delays freight movement, and supporting long-term economic competitiveness.

Additionally, public transit relies on more than 3,000 suppliers in all 50 states, supporting manufacturing investments across the country. Robust funding for transit and passenger rail programs will modernize aging systems, improve safety and reliability, strengthen multimodal connectivity, and sustain the nationwide manufacturing base that produces the vehicles, materials, and technologies these systems depend on.

Maritime

Modern ports and waterways are essential to reliable manufacturing supply chains, yet aging infrastructure and excessive cargo dwell times cost manufacturers an estimated \$13 billion annually in carrying costs and demurrage. Manufacturers support robust funding for port modernization and waterway improvements through programs such as the Port Infrastructure Development Program, as well as the enactment of a strong Water Resources Development Act to improve port efficiency, support national security, strengthen freight reliability, and support economic competitiveness. We also appreciate the Committee's inclusion of Title IX, Sport Fishing and Recreational Boating Safety, which will support manufacturers of American recreational boating vessels and drive America's tourism and outdoors industries.

Intermodal

Efficient intermodal connections are vital to reducing freight costs and keeping goods moving reliably between ports, rail networks, and highways, yet bottlenecks at cargo transfer points continue to force freight onto costlier modes and limit supply chain efficiency. Manufacturers support full utilization of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund and continued investment in intermodal connectivity programs to reduce port bottlenecks and improve the safe and efficient movement of goods across the supply chain.

The bill's emphasis on freight mobility and multimodal connectivity will help reduce bottlenecks, strengthen supply chain resilience, and improve the efficient movement of manufactured goods throughout the country.

Aviation

Manufacturers rely on a safe and efficient aviation network to move high-value, time-sensitive goods and support integrated domestic and global supply chains. Manufacturers appreciate the bill's continued support for multimodal freight connectivity and transportation technologies that strengthen system reliability, improve safety, and support more efficient movement of air cargo throughout the national transportation network. Continued investment in modern aviation infrastructure, airport connectivity, and next-generation transportation technologies will help strengthen supply chain resilience and support long-term economic competitiveness.

Water

Reliable water infrastructure is essential to manufacturing operations, yet 450,000 miles of water mains have already exceeded their useful lives, increasing the risk of disruptions, contamination, and costly production delays. Manufacturers support robust funding for the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds, expanded use of public-private partnerships through the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, continued investment in pipe replacement and system resiliency, and targeted PFAS remediation efforts to protect public health and strengthen manufacturing reliability. To complement the Committee's manufacturing-focused legislation being marked up this week, the NAM is committed to continuing to work with the Committee and all other congressional stakeholders to deliver strong water infrastructure funding as the legislative process continues.

Safety

A safe transportation network is fundamental to economic growth, supply chain reliability, and the efficient movement of people and goods. Manufacturers appreciate the bill's strong emphasis on protecting roadway workers and first responders through expanded support for predictive analytics, telematics, digital alerting systems, and other innovation-driven safety tools. A continued focus on advancing performance-based approaches—rather than prescriptive requirements—will preserve flexibility, avoid unnecessarily burdensome mandates, and allow manufacturers to continue driving the next generation of transportation safety innovation.

The bill also takes important steps to modernize transportation safety policy through the establishment of a new federal framework for autonomous commercial motor vehicles, including provisions related to interstate operations, state law review, and regulatory flexibility for emerging safety technologies. Together, these provisions will help improve roadway safety, reduce work zone incidents, support more efficient project delivery, and strengthen safer freight movement nationwide.

Permitting Reform and Project Delivery

Permitting delays and regulatory uncertainty continue to undermine infrastructure investment and project delivery, with 80% of manufacturers reporting that permitting complexity harms investment decisions. Manufacturers need certainty, which is why the NAM supports commonsense permitting reforms that create clear and enforceable timelines, streamline duplicative reviews under laws such as NEPA and the Clean Water Act, modernize Clean Air Act implementation, and accelerate the construction of critical transportation, water, and energy infrastructure needed to strengthen supply chains, improve reliability, and support long-term economic growth.

The NAM appreciates and commends the Committee for including such bold provisions around permitting reform and project delivery in the BUILD America 250 Act. From expanding categorical exclusions, to extending judicial review reforms between modes, to more effectively implementing One Federal Decision, to instituting more strict time and page limit requirements, this bill will allow manufacturers in America to make and move products more efficiently.

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Sustained, strong federal infrastructure investment helps drive innovation, supports high-quality American jobs, and enables continued deployment of technologies and materials that improve safety, resilience, and operational efficiency across the transportation system. An efficient and competitive supply chain relies on all modes of transportation working together, and the NAM appreciates the Committee's multimodal approach.

With critical highway programs expiring at the end of this fiscal year, now is the time for the Committee to advance a long-term surface transportation reauthorization that keeps people and goods moving safely and efficiently across the country. Manufacturers rely on consistent, long-term infrastructure funding certainty to confidently invest in new facilities and create jobs. We hope this momentum will continue through September, enabling Congress to enact an on-time surface transportation reauthorization bill, and we strongly encourage Members to support the BUILD America 250 Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles F. Crain". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charles Crain
Managing Vice President, Policy