

November 19, 2013

Dear House and Senate Budget Resolution Conferees:

The Americans for Transportation Mobility Coalition (ATM) is a nationwide alliance of business, labor, highway and public transit organizations advocating for improving the nation's transportation infrastructure through program efficiencies and increased federal investment. The ATM urges you and your fellow conferees to seize the opportunity to restore the nation to fiscal health. We strongly urge you to include in any such agreement a framework for solving the crisis facing the federal Highway Trust Fund.

According to the latest projections by the Congressional Budget Office, balances in both the highway account and the mass transit account will reach zero in fiscal year (FY) 2015 unless additional revenues are deposited into the trust fund or significant cuts are made to the federal highway and transit programs. An attempt to solve this problem through spending cuts alone would mean there could be no new spending on highways or transit systems in FY 2015. These programs could then only be funded at approximately two-thirds of their current levels in FY 2016 and each year thereafter. America's current economic recovery is far too weak to sustain such a devastating blow.

The Highway Trust Fund has faced impending insolvency before. Each time Congress has rejected draconian spending cuts in favor of a series of one-time revenue infusions into the trust fund—totaling almost \$55 billion since 2008. In addition to placing an increased burden on the general fund, these temporary measures create a great deal of uncertainty which negatively impact both the public and private sector's ability to engage in long-term transportation planning, hire additional workers, and make significant capital investments.

The budget conference presents an ideal opportunity to create a framework to increase revenues deposited into the Highway Trust Fund. The Simpson-Bowles Commission, Rivlin-Domenici Commission, and other high-profile, bi-partisan groups seeking agreement on fiscal reforms have all included shoring up the Highway Trust Fund in their recommendations. Highway Trust Fund solvency was included in these proposals for two key reasons: first, investing in transportation infrastructure results in higher economic growth as transportation investments make our economic centers more efficiently integrated; second, the uncertainty associated with the trust fund's structural deficit creates an opaque and inefficient drag on the federal budget and the economy. Again, we urge you to include increased Highway Trust Fund revenues in any budget resolution assumptions or reconciliation instructions.

Sincerely,

Americans for Transportation Mobility Coalition

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*ATM Management Committee Members*

American Public Transportation Association • American Road and Transportation Builders Association • American Society of Civil Engineers • Associated Equipment Distributors • Association of Equipment Manufacturers • Associated General Contractors • International Union of Operating Engineers • Laborers International Union of North America • National Asphalt Pavement Association • National Stone, Sand, and Gravel Association • U.S. Chamber of Commerce