

May 12, 2010

David Obey, Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on
Appropriations
H-218, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Jerry Lewis, Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on
Appropriations
H-218, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Lewis,

We write in strong support of the Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities, which links the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in an unprecedented collaboration to coordinate federal housing, transportation, and environmental investments. We encourage you to make this innovative collaboration possible by approving the President's request for funding in the FY2011 budget for the Sustainable Communities programs within HUD, DOT and EPA.

We believe that the President's FY2011 budget for the Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities is an important step in making communities of all sizes and locations more economically competitive, healthy, safe, socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable. These resources are essential for small towns, rural communities, and underserved urban areas to undertake the planning necessary to meet changing housing and transportation demands; improve community health outcomes; connect workers to jobs and economic opportunity, strengthen regional economies; provide greater household stability through access to goods and services; and create transit-rich, safe, walkable and bikeable neighborhoods.

Specifically, we support:

- \$150 million for HUD's Sustainable Communities Initiative to enable HUD to continue supporting comprehensive regional and community planning efforts that integrate transportation and housing investments that result in more regional and local sustainable development patterns, reduce greenhouse gases, and increase more transit accessible housing choices for residents.
- \$20 million for DOT's Office of Livable Communities to help the Secretary coordinate livability and sustainability work throughout the Department and coordinate with similar programs at HUD and EPA.
- \$200 million for the Federal Highway Administration to help state and local governments integrate planning processes for transportation, land use and natural resource conservation. These funds could be used for improved modeling, data collection and assessment tools to meet sustainability goals through transportation investments.
- Full funding for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs to help state and local governments invest in transportation infrastructure that reduces greenhouse gases, improves mobility and access for disadvantaged people, and increases housing choices.
- At least \$11.23 million for EPA's Sustainable Communities Initiative funded through its successful Smart Growth Program, allowing the agency to fully participate in the

Partnership for Sustainable Communities and to continue providing direct technical assistance and research to help communities meet economic and environmental challenges with sustainable solutions. The Smart Growth program has absorbed a number of other staff and programming duties due to internal restructuring, and we have concerns about how much money will be diverted away from technical assistance to cope with added administrative responsibilities. Therefore, we support an increase of funding for EPA's Smart Growth Program in FY 2011 to adequately assist communities in implementing the Partnership's sustainability initiatives.

The Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities represents a vital opportunity to effectively coordinate and leverage federal programs for the greatest impact on long-term community well being. We urge you to support these important programs in the FY 2011 Appropriations process.

For more information about our coalition, please contact Natalie Robles with Smart Growth America at nrobles@smartgrowthamerica.org, (202) 207-3355 ext. 136.

Sincerely,

National Groups

America Bikes
American Planning Association
American Public Health Association
American Public Transportation Association
Center for Community Progress
Congress for the New Urbanism
Enterprise Community Partners
Habitat for Humanity International
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Locus, Responsible Real Estate Developers and Investors
Mercy Housing, Inc.
National Center for Bicycling & Walking
National Complete Streets Coalition
National Housing Conference
National Housing Trust
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Natural Resources Defense Council
NCB Capital Impact
PolicyLink
Project for Public Spaces
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Rebuilding Together
Reconnecting America
Sierra Club
Smart Growth America
TOD/CNI Associates

Elected Officials and Local Governments

Mayor Mufi Hannemann, City and County of Honolulu (*Hawaii*)
Vice-Mayor Roxanne Qualls, City of Cincinnati (*Ohio*)
Representative Linda Slocum (District 63B), Minnesota House of Representatives
Arlington County (*Virginia*)

Cuyahoga County (*Ohio*)
Sacramento Area Council Of Governments (*California*)

State and Local Groups

1,000 Friends of Florida
1,000 Friends of Minnesota
Alliance for Metropolitan Stability (*Minnesota*)
California WALKS
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance
Center for Planning Excellence (*Louisiana*)
City CarShare (*California*)
Colorado Environmental Coalition
Endangered Habitats League (*California*)
Fresh Energy (*Minnesota*)
Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (*Ohio*)
Greenbelt Alliance (*California*)
Growth and Justice (*Minnesota*)
Health by Design (*Indiana*)
Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura (*Ventura, California*)
Housing Preservation Project (*Minnesota*)
homeWORD (*Montana*)
Jean T. Jianos
Livable Communities Coalition (*Atlanta, Georgia*)
Local Government Commission (*California*)
Metropolitan Planning Council (*Chicago, Illinois*)
Metro St. Louis Coalition for Inclusion & Equity, M-SLICE (*Missouri*)
Metro West Housing Solutions, (*Lakewood, California*)
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
Minnesota Housing Partnership
Montana Home Choice Coalition
Montana Independent Living Project
Network for Oregon Affordable Housing
New Jersey Future
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (*California*)
San Francisco Foundation (*California*)
San Diego Housing Commission (*California*)
St. Paul Smart Trips (*Minnesota*)
Train Riders Association of California
TransformCA (*California*)
The Transit Coalition (*California*)
Transportation Alternatives (*New York City, New York*)
Urban Habitat (*California*)
Working for Equality and Economic Liberation (WEEL) (*Montana*)

CC:

Representative John Olver, Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

Representative James Moran, Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies