



**Transportation
for America**

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December 14, 2010

Office of U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Boxer,

As elected officials working in local governments across California, we strive each day to create healthy and vibrant communities with strong economies. While the specific details of our visions may vary, the principles guiding our goals are aligned. We share the common purpose of working to foster sustainable local employment opportunities to build resilient, prosperous communities. We seek to ensure that our citizens have ample and affordable choices for transportation so that they can efficiently and safely access jobs, stores, and recreation. We work to ensure that our communities are inviting, unique places. We aim to foster places in which thriving urban centers and majestic natural beauty contribute to the legacy of California as an international destination as well as a great place to call home.

In short, we believe that our job is to continue building a better future for our constituents, and to contribute through our local endeavors to the strength of California and our nation.

In pursuing these goals, we currently face economic and environmental challenges that have been very difficult for us and our residents. The current recession has created astonishing unemployment rates that hover around 12%, and the economic slowdown has dramatically reduced city budgets for planning and public works. The gas price spike in 2008 left families struggling with the increased cost of travel to and from homes not served by other transportation options, which are further faced with increased likelihood of foreclosure.¹ Traffic jams are costing our communities over \$18.3 billion dollars annually² in lost time and wasted fuel while the state's raid on public transportation funding has forced our local transit agencies to cut service and raise fares.³ Many of our residents struggle with costly health problems related to transportation: nearly a third of our children are obese,⁴ and one-sixth have asthma.⁵ California pays over \$21 billion annually in health care costs and lost productivity due to overweight, obesity, and physical inactivity.⁶ And the price tag on public health impacts from air pollution in the San Joaquin Valley and South Coast regions alone are \$28 billion annually.⁷

As elected leaders, we want to ensure that our citizens have the tools they need to revive the 21st century economy, and we know we cannot do it without state and federal support. We also know that, as Chair of the EPW Committee, your efforts are critical for a transportation bill that provides families and individuals with more efficient, affordable, safe, and environmentally sustainable transportation options that decrease our dependency on oil and create healthy communities where people can live, work, and play. That is why *we commend your leadership* and we are committed to supporting the

Transportation for America (T4 America) is the largest, most diverse coalition working on transportation reform today. Our nation's transportation network is based on a policy that has not been significantly updated since the 1950's. We believe it is time for a bold new vision — transportation that guarantees our freedom to move however we choose and leads to a stronger economy, greater energy security, cleaner environment and healthier America for all of us. We're calling for more responsible investment of our federal tax dollars to create a safer, cleaner, smarter transportation system that works for everyone.

efforts you undertake to pass a bill that will achieve these goals and chart a new course for our communities and economy.

We are joining the Transportation for America campaign to advocate for a federal transportation bill that:

- Establishes national transportation objectives and holds agencies accountable for making investments to achieve these;
- Seeks more diverse and sustainable sources of funding for these federal transportation priorities;
- Rewards communities for plans and investments that pay off for people, the environment, and the economy;
- Increases funding for programs that support safe walking and biking and reduce exposure to vehicle injuries and dirty air;
- Strengthens programs to restore and maintain our existing local highways, roads, thoroughfares, bridges, and transit systems, and maximizes their efficiency; and,
- Provides an increased commitment to funding transit expansion and operations.

Transportation investments drive the economic development of a region. When gasoline prices spiked in the summer of 2008, many Americans looked for alternatives to driving. The increases in walking, bicycling, and ridership on buses and trains accelerated a trend that our local real estate developers were already seeing—a growing demand for transit-oriented developments and walkable communities. And, this year a bipartisan poll found that over 80% of Americans believe that our nation would benefit from an expanded and improved public transportation system.⁸ This increase in demand presents a new opportunity in which consumer and voter preferences support smart development that creates jobs, stimulates economic growth, and eases our dependence on foreign oil.

Ignoring the warnings of the BP oil disaster, the dramatic rise in gasoline prices and our current recession is not an option. We need to champion a national transportation vision that embraces the multimodal solutions that support the shifting demands of Americans. We need transportation choices that will be safe for our environment. And, we must provide a robust network of options including: safe and efficient roads; affordable and accessible public transportation; and a comprehensive bike and pedestrian infrastructure. **To ensure that federal transportation policy helps us achieve our local goals, we have chosen to partner with Transportation for America and their campaign to reform federal transportation policy.**

Not since the creation of the Interstate Highway System has there been a moment like this to invest strategically in our communities. The United States has spent the past 50 years developing a robust highway system. Now it's time to complete our transportation system with equally robust public transit and active transportation networks. Californians are looking to you to lead the way to a 21st century transportation system that is safer, cleaner, smarter, and works for all communities. We look forward



to working with you to pass a bill that will make this vision a reality, and put us on the path to a clean, healthy, and prosperous future. We stand ready to support your efforts to advance these critical reforms.

Sincerely,

Mayor Tom Bates, City of Berkeley
Mayor Evan D. Low, City of Campbell
Mayor Carol Russell, City of Cloverdale
Mayor Ann Cheng, City of El Cerrito
Mayor Ara Najarian, City of Glendale
Mayor Danny Tabor, City of Inglewood
Mayor Ron Dellums, City of Oakland
Mayor Bill Bogaard, City of Pasadena
Mayor Ron Loveridge, City of Riverside
Mayor Gavin Newsom, City of San Francisco
Mayor Genoveva Calloway, City of San Pablo
Mayor Richard Bloom, City of Santa Monica
Mayor Mark Green, City of Union City
Mayor Bill Fulton, City of Ventura
Mayor Kevin Johnson, City of Sacramento
Mayor Christopher Cabaldon, City of West Sacramento
Mayor Pro Tem Pam O'Connor, City of Santa Monica
Vice Mayor Jean Quan, City of Oakland
Vice Mayor Jeff Ritterman, City of Richmond
Supervisor Alice Lai-Bitker, Alameda County
Supervisor Nate Miley, Alameda County
Supervisor Federal Glover, Contra Costa County
Supervisor Eric Mar, City of San Francisco
Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi, City of San Francisco
Supervisor Mark Lovelace, Humboldt County
Supervisor Steve Kinsey, Marin County
Supervisor Bill Dodd, Napa County
Supervisor Roger Dickinson, Sacramento County
Supervisor Kathy Long, Ventura County
Councilmember Lena Tam, City of Alameda
Councilmember Shane Brinton, City of Arcata
Councilmember Kriss Worthington, City of Berkeley
Councilmember Daniel Furtado, City of Campbell
Councilmember Barbara Denny, City of Coronado
Councilmember Ruben Abrica, City of East Palo Alto
Councilmember Janet Abelson, City of El Cerrito
Councilmember Jennifer West, City of Emeryville
Councilmember Ed Balico, City of Hercules
Councilmember Gary DeLong, City of Long Beach

Councilmember Gerrie Schipske, City of Long Beach
 Councilmember Robert Garcia, City of Long Beach
 Councilmember Steven Neal, City of Long Beach
 Councilmember Ed Reyes, City of Los Angeles
 Councilmember Nancy Nadel, City of Oakland
 Councilmember Rebecca Kaplan, City of Oakland
 Councilmember Amy Worth, City of Orinda
 Councilmember Jacqueline Robinson, City of Pasadena
 Councilmember Teresa Barrett, City of Petaluma
 Councilmember Jon Harrison, City of Redlands
 Councilmember Barbara Pierce, City of Redwood City
 Councilmember Jake McKenzie, City of Rohnert Park
 Councilmember Kevin McCarty, City of Sacramento
 Councilmember Robert King Fong, City of Sacramento
 Councilmember Sandy Sheedy, City of Sacramento
 Councilmember Steve Cohn, City of Sacramento
 Councilmember Ray Tretheway, City of Sacramento
 Councilmember Todd Gloria, City of San Diego
 Councilmember Ash Kalra, City of San Jose
 Councilmember Nora Campos, City of San Jose
 Councilmember Sam Liccardo, City of San Jose
 Councilmember Jim Prola, City of San Leandro
 Councilmember Michael Gregory, City of San Leandro
 Councilmember Jamie McLeod, City of Santa Clara
 Councilmember Terry O'Day, City of Santa Monica
 Councilmember Kish Rajan, City of Walnut Creek

¹ NRDC. Reducing Foreclosures and Environmental Impacts through Location-Efficient Neighborhood Design:

<http://www.nrdc.org/energy/files/LocationEfficiency4pgr.pdf>

² Texas Transportation Institute. 2009 Annual Urban Mobility Report: <http://mobility.tamu.edu/ums/>

³ California Transit Association: <http://www.caltransit.org/files/resources/07%20STA%20member%20survey.doc>

⁴ California Department of Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/co/in/se/yr05healthychildrenwp.asp>

⁵ UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. 2007 California Health Interview Survey: <http://www.rampasthma.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/RAMPasthmaCaliforniaWeb.pdf>

⁶ California Department of Health Services. Strategies to Reduce Obesity and Overweight:

http://www.applications.dhs.ca.gov/wic/research/PANCC%20Policy%20Statement_Final%20%282%29.pdf

⁷ Jane Hall Ph. D. & Victor Brajer Ph. D., California State Fullerton, The Benefits of Meeting Clean Air Standards in the South Coast and San Joaquin Valley Air Basins:

<http://business.fullerton.edu/centers/iees/reports/Benefits%20of%20Meeting%20Clean%20Air%20Standards.pdf>

⁸ Transportation For America, 2010 Future of National Transportation Survey: <http://t4america.org/resources/2010survey/>