Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 21, 2015

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
House Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member
House Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
B-376 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
B-376 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member DeFazio, Chairman Graves, and Ranking Member Holmes Norton:

As the Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure prepares to craft a MAP-21 reauthorization bill, we write to urge you to make funding for the nation's crumbling bridges a top priority. Without adequate investment in bridges, these vital components of our nation's transportation network will continue to deteriorate, threatening the safety and well being of the traveling public. There is little room for error when it comes to bridge safety, as they must remain structurally sound in order to ensure that vehicles and motorists are secure.

According to the most recent data from the American Society of Civil Engineers, one in nine bridges are structurally deficient, requiring significant maintenance, rehabilitation, or replacement. The Federal Highway Administration estimates that to eliminate the nation's deficient bridge backlog by 2028, we would need to invest $20.5 billion annually - though only $12.8 billion is currently being spent. As Congress prepares to reauthorize MAP-21, it is critically important that we commit adequate federal resources to address this significant need.

In California, roughly 12 percent of our state's nearly 25,000 bridges are structurally deficient. While the State and its local governments have placed an emphasis on financing essential bridge safety projects, critical needs are not being met. For local agency bridges alone, there is an estimated funding shortfall of $1.3 billion over the next ten years.

Moreover, unlike most other states throughout the country, many locally-owned bridges in California (over 52 percent) are located ***on*** the Federal-Aid Highway System. While local off-system bridges receive a special funding set-aside under MAP-21, on-system bridges do ***not*** have a dedicated funding source. These projects, therefore, must compete for limited dollars, meaning many essential on-system bridge projects in our state are left shortchanged. This lack of parity among bridge projects creates an undue burden and hardship on local governments and

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ultimately endangers our constituents as they use bridges that are ill equipped to handle sustained deterioration. We believe it is essential for Congress provide a funding stream for local on-system bridges that adequately addresses the funding backlog currently leading to the continued deterioration of our nation's infrastructure. The current funding system simply does not do enough to end the backlog.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. We look forward to continuing to work with you on this and other important issues as the Committee considers options for a new transportation bill.

Sincerely,

JEFF DENHAM
Member of Congress

GRACE NAPOLITANO
Member of Congress

DUNCAN HUNTER
Member of Congress

JULIA BROWNLEY
Member of Congress

MIMI WALTERS
Member of Congress

JANICE HAHN
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