

April 25, 2023



The Honorable Tom Cole, Chairman
The Honorable Mike Quigley, Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and
Urban Development, and Related Agencies
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

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Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member Quigley,

As you draft the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) requests a strong investment in our transportation infrastructure by supporting key programs and maintaining the commitments made by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

ASCE's 2021 *Report Card for America's Infrastructure* gave the overall condition of our nation's infrastructure a cumulative grade of "C-." Transportation-related categories are especially in need of a boost, as the nation's roads earned a "D," bridges earned a "C," aviation earned a "D+," and transit earned a "D-." The IIJA represents a significant step forward in raising these grades.

ASCE views the proposed plan for lawmakers to cap funding for FY 2024 discretionary spending at FY 2022 levels as detrimental for public safety, infrastructure modernization, and transportation services. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg's March 9th letter to House Committee on Appropriations Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro outlines some of the ramifications of such a decision. For example, constraining funding to FY 2022 levels would result in serious cuts to vehicle, rail, pipeline, and aviation safety inspections, compromised maintenance and operations practices, and limited research endeavors. At a time when transportation safety is a leading concern, ASCE strongly urges Congress to appropriate authorized levels of funding and continue to support transportation programs.

Specifically, ASCE requests:

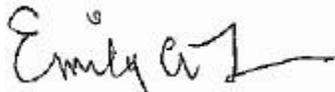
- **\$5.5 billion for the Bridge Replacement, Rehabilitation, Preservation, Protection, and Construction Program (Bridge Formula Program).** The largest dedicated bridge investment since the construction of the Interstate Highway System, this program is a key step to addressing the \$125 billion backlog of bridge repair and rehabilitation efforts. According to ASCE's 2021 Report Card, 42% of all bridges are at least 50 years old. Some 46,154 bridges, or 7.5% of the nation's total bridges, are considered structurally deficient. Due to the total number of fair bridges surpassing the total number of good bridges for the first time, the nation's bridges were the only grade on the 2021 Report Card that decreased, going from a "C+" to a "C."
- **\$3.35 billion for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP)** to fund airport capital improvements and rehabilitation projects. Increasing funding for this critical program will help raise the "D+" aviation received on the 2021 Report Card and support much-needed improvements to a sector that has seen several safety incidents in the past few months. One of ASCE's priorities for this year's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization is increasing funding for the AIP, which has had the same annual authorization level of \$3.35 billion for well over a decade.

- **\$1.5 billion for Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)** grants, which help deliver freight and passenger transportation projects with significant local or regional impact. ASCE believes funding for transportation systems needs to be substantially maintained to meet current and future demand.
- **\$3 billion for Capital Investment Grants (CIG)** to provide new and expanded transit services. Transit received a “D-” the 2021 Report Card, the lowest grade of any category. Currently, there is a \$176 billion transit backlog, a deficit that is expected to grow to more than \$270 billion through 2029. Funding for the CIG program will help reduce this backlog and mitigate some of the issues on the nation’s sprawling transit network.
- **\$510 million for the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)** program to fund passenger and freight rail projects. The Federal Railroad Administration’s (FRA) most oversubscribed program, CRISI supports the safety, efficiency, and reliability of the country’s rail system. Rail safety has garnered national attention in the wake of the February derailment of a Norfolk Southern Corporation train carrying hazardous materials, and the CRISI program provides needed federal support to this sector.
- **\$230 million for the Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP)** to improve port infrastructure and related freight facilities. The PIDP provides a key investment in our nation’s ports, which serve as important economic engines and support millions of jobs.
- **\$1.8 billion for the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT)** program to make transportation infrastructure more resilient to weather events such as wildfires, flooding, and extreme heat. ASCE supports initiatives that increase the resilience of infrastructure against man-made and natural hazards through education, research, planning, construction, operation, and maintenance.

Dependable funding for transportation programs is necessary to ensure people and goods move safely and efficiently on all modes of travel. ASCE requests a robust investment in transportation infrastructure that builds on the commitments made by the IIJA, which is a substantial down payment in closing the infrastructure investment gap. Scaling back spending to FY 2022 levels would be a negative step that would jeopardize safety and limit transportation operations. ASCE asks Congress to fund these programs at fully authorized levels and demonstrate strong support for transportation, which is the foundation for economic growth and access to jobs and opportunity. Additionally, ASCE would like to emphasize the need to fully fund formula programs that are supported by the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). The dependable flow of federal funding through formula programs is critical for projects led by states, Tribes, and transit agencies.

Thank you for your consideration of our funding requests. We look forward to working with members of the subcommittee to support these successful federal infrastructure programs.

Sincerely,



Emily A. Feenstra
Chief Policy and External Affairs Officer at ASCE