

Dear Members of Congress,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and our millions of members and supporters, we write to express support for the *Connecting America's Active Transportation System Act*. This bill will provide direct federal competitive grants to governments to build safe and connected walking and biking routes. Just as highways and rails must be connected into functional systems to achieve their objectives, walking and biking routes provide far greater returns when we fill in the gaps between existing facilities.

The reauthorization of the FAST Act provides an opportunity to create safe and affordable routes to meet the mobility needs of all Americans while enhancing the public health and economic well-being of rural, suburban and urban communities. The Connecting America's Active Transportation System Act cosponsored by Sens. Ed Markey (Mass.), Chris Van Hollen (Md.), Kamala Harris (Calif.), and Richard Blumenthal (Conn.), in the Senate, and Reps. Jared Huffman (Calif.-2), Daniel Lipinski (Ill.-3) and Chris Pappas (N.H.-1) in the House; will provide \$500 million per year of funding for active transportation networks to connect routine destinations within regions and to connect between communities and across state lines.

Nearly half of all trips Americans take are within a 20-minute bicycle ride and more than 20 percent of all trips are within a 20-minute walk. Shifting some of these short trips from driving to walking and bicycling can cost effectively reduce pollution and traffic congestion, while increasing physical activity levels and enhancing mobility for people with disabilities. The Non-motorized Pilot Project established by Congress in SAFETEA-LU demonstrated that such mode shift occurs when active transportation facilities are connected and promoted.

The reauthorization of the FAST Act is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to prioritize active transportation networks to give people access to affordable, safe and healthy mobility options. Current federal programs are essential to provide resources for individual walking and biking projects, but completing America's active transportation system will take far too many decades without supplemental federal investment focused on seeding a federal/state/local partnership to connect existing facilities within and between regions.

Congress has the opportunity now to provide strategically focused investment that will meet burgeoning demand to connect safe walking and biking routes to everyday destinations and complete the nation's active transportation system.

Please include the *Connecting America's Active Transportation System Act* in the transportation reauthorization bill that you are currently developing.

Sincerely,



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