



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

October 4, 2007

Thank you for your e-mail about the importance of bicycling and walking as a form of transportation. I share your interest in a safe, efficient multimodal transportation system.

Your e-mail discussed comments I made during a recent interview regarding the importance of effectively prioritizing major transportation spending decisions. These comments were in no way intended as an indictment of bicycle and pedestrian investments broadly. Rather, they were part of a much larger critique of the processes by which investment decisions are increasingly being made at the Federal level. Too often, political influence and power are guiding transportation spending priorities, instead of merit, competition, data, and analysis.

The U.S. Department of Transportation believes that bicyclists and pedestrians are legitimate and welcome users of our Nation's transportation system. They are a healthy part of the solution to congestion in our urban areas. We also believe that States, metropolitan planning organizations, and transit agencies are in the best position to understand the unique needs of their own communities, which is why we have continued to strongly support broad eligibility under the Federal-aid program for a diverse mix of transportation investments, including bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities.

Programs that improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians are also eligible for Federal safety dollars. Although the number of bicyclist and pedestrian injuries and fatalities has dropped by 10 percent since 1994, fatalities have increased in the last 2 years, and this is not acceptable.

Thank you again for voicing your opinion. I hope to continue to work with bicycling and pedestrian advocates as we face the challenges of meeting our country's changing transportation needs.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary E. Peters".

Mary E. Peters