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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 24, 2012

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

Dear Chairman Mica:

As our Committee moves toward introduction of the legislation reauthorizing our federal transportation priorities, I respectfully request that you include legislative language that would permit the use of toll credits for Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) projects. This language is imperative to Pennsylvania's ability to leverage significant, previously allocated federal funding.

In 2005, language was included in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) to prohibit states from using toll credits toward the non-federal share on road projects within in the ADHS. Revision of this policy is one of my highest priorities on the Committee.

As Co-Chairman of the Appalachian Regional Commission Caucus, I can attest to the positive impact reverting to pre-2005 policy will have on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the other 12 Appalachian Regional Commission member states. Specific to Pennsylvania, it will allow for the continued construction of Route 219, a major highway that serves as a critical transportation link along the Eastern corridor. To date, considerable construction has already begun to update Route 219 from the Maryland border through Pennsylvania. Allowing Pennsylvania the flexibility to use toll credits toward this project will leverage previously allocated federal funds, create jobs, and lay the groundwork for substantial economic development now and in the future.

Our colleague on the Committee, Congressman Bill Shuster, has introduced legislation that I have cosponsored to permit the use of toll credits for ADHS projects. Lifting the prohibition on using toll credits will unlock existing unspent balances, make it easier for states to access future funding, allow ADHS projects to move forward, and eliminate a disparity that does not exist for the vast majority of other federal transportation programs.

THIS MAILING WAS PREPARED, PUBLISHED, AND MAILED AT TAXPAYER EXPENSE.

I appreciate your consideration of this important matter, and thank you for your commitment to moving a transportation reauthorization in this Congress.

Sincerely,

Jason Altmire

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