

KEY VOTE ALERT!

February 15, 2012

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the transportation infrastructure reauthorization legislation that the House has begun to consider. This package of bills, H.R. 7, H.R. 3408 and H.R. 3813, would reinvest in domestic transportation infrastructure, and would help enhance U.S. energy policy by expanding domestic energy production; long term revenues from increased exploration would help ensure long term transportation funding. The Chamber urges you to strongly support this legislation, and urges you to oppose any amendments that would weaken it.

H.R. 7 is a responsible infrastructure investment bill that would extensively reform transportation programs, would make states more accountable for how federal funds are spent, would speed project delivery to reduce overall costs, would provide greater opportunities for private sector investment, and does not contain earmarks. Specifically, the bill would provide for:

- Modernization and maintenance of highway, transit and intermodal assets identified as being in the national interest;
- Continuing a federal role in ensuring a comprehensive, results-oriented approach to safety;
- Focusing on freight to ensure adequate capacity, reduce congestion and increase throughput at key choke points;
- Supporting congestion mitigation and improved mobility in urban areas;
- Supporting rural connectivity to major economic and population centers;
- Speeding project delivery;
- Consolidating and simplifying the federal program structure;
- Increasing accountability for investment of public funds and expanding performance management;
- Supporting research and development toward application of improved technologies; and
- Enhancing opportunities for the private sector to partner with the public sector on infrastructure projects.

Although the Chamber believes that the necessary revenues for transportation infrastructure projects should come from a user-fee based source structured to ensure that the purchasing power of revenue sources keeps pace with inflation and is sustainable and predictable, the Chamber recognizes that such an approach lacks consensus in this Congress. Therefore, the Chamber believes it would be appropriate for Congress to employ general fund resources, including spending reductions, rescissions of authority and other savings measures, to move forward with a multi-year bill and the much needed policy and funding certainty to the states, locals and the private sector provided in this legislation.



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The Chamber remains very concerned with provisions of the bill that would make changes to how transit programs are funded. Unfortunately, such provisions of the bill would create uncertainty and put current and future public transportation investments in jeopardy. We look forward to working with the House, Senate and Administration as the legislative process continues to ensure that transit is provided sustainable and dedicated long term funding levels.

The energy components of the legislation would create long-term jobs and help expand long-term domestic energy security and energy production. These provisions fully restore access to America's offshore oil and gas resources, a move that could provide hundreds of thousands of additional new jobs, hundreds of billions of dollars in cumulative additional revenue for the government, and several million additional barrels oil equivalent per day. The legislation would establish clear rules for the production of domestic oil shale and would remove regulatory barriers that are preventing development of one of America's greatest strategic and economic assets. Furthermore, by opening less than three percent of the North Slope of Alaska to environmentally responsible oil and gas exploration, this legislation would help prolong the life of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System by ensuring that oil continues to flow through the pipeline while creating important jobs in Alaska and throughout the country. In all, the energy provisions of the legislation would create jobs while adding more stability to energy supplies, a true "win-win" scenario for American consumers.

The Chamber strongly supports efforts by Congress to undo President Obama's rejection of the vital Keystone XL project. This legislation would be an important step towards approval of the proposed 1,600-mile Keystone XL pipeline, which would deliver more than 700,000 barrels of oil per day from Alberta, Canada, through Cushing, Oklahoma, to Gulf Coast refineries. The \$7 billion project is expected to create a more than 20,000 jobs during the manufacturing and construction phases of the project. The pipeline would also reduce need for foreign oil imports from less stable regions of the world. In addition, Keystone XL would provide much need supply distribution infrastructure for American domestic energy producers in the Upper Northwest/Bakken region and in the Southwest.

The Chamber strongly opposes any amendment that would bar exports of petroleum that would pass through the Keystone XL pipeline, or any product refined from such crude. First, such an amendment is unnecessary. Virtually all of the crude that would travel through the Keystone XL pipeline would be refined at American refineries by American workers. Congress should support – not hamper – these American energy workers. Second, such a law would violate commitments the United States has undertaken as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). In fact, the United States recently challenged China's export restraints on certain raw materials at the WTO, and the United States won a clear victory in the case. Restricting the re-export of crude or refined product from Keystone XL would violate the same WTO rules.

The U.S. has just begun reversing a two-decade-long decline in energy independence by increasing the proportion of demand met by utilizing all domestic energy sources. America needs a comprehensive energy policy that takes advantage of all domestic energy resources. The Chamber applauds the House for considering legislation that expands production and transmission of oil and natural gas in this infrastructure legislation. At the same time, we encourage the House to also focus on legislation that expands the development of all other domestic energy sources, including coal and renewables.

The Chamber strongly opposes any amendment to the transportation and energy portions of this legislation that would seek to impose "Buy America" like provisions. Such provisions would have the unintended consequence of delaying the implementation of job-creating projects and greatly diminish competition and efficiency in the contracting process. The direct result would be delayed projects, fewer

projects funded, and fewer Americans put back to work. The United States already imposes significant “Buy America” requirements at the federal level that restrict access to procurement markets for countries that have not opened their procurement markets to our exporters, in accordance with the multilateral Government Procurement Agreement. There is no need to expand “Buy America” provisions—doing so would be highly counterproductive, particularly for industry sectors hard hit by the recession.

Additionally, the Chamber supports an amendment offered by Rep. Scalise, which is based on the bipartisan RESTORE Act. This amendment would provide much needed funding to economic and ecosystem restoration efforts in the Gulf Coast solely through the dedication of Clean Water Act penalties collected from the parties responsible for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world’s largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million members and organizations of every size, sector, and region, strongly supports H.R. 7, H.R. 3408 and H.R. 3813. **The Chamber will consider including votes on, or in relation to, this legislation in our annual How They Voted scorecard.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Bruce Josten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

R. Bruce Josten