

Dear Chairman Young:

I appreciate the efforts you are making to reauthorize the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) for six years. I am a member of the American Society of Highway Engineers (A.S.H.E.). A.S.H.E. is a National organization comprised of members of the transportation industry throughout the United States who deliver the vitally needed transportation projects that keep the economy vibrant. I understand the urgency of this endeavor and hereby offer our support to you.

The five-month extension of TEA-21, signed by President Bush on September 30, 2003, and the proposed four-month extension currently proposed, is insufficient to keep the pipeline of projects flowing. I understand that many states are facing cutbacks and are already placing design, planning, and environmental contracts on hold. Since the State DOT's cannot count on a steady flow of federal dollars, many are postponing and shelving multi-year projects. Without timely reauthorization, construction programs will shrink. The economic effects will dampen our country's economic growth.

I urge Congress to act now to extend TEA-21 for six years, so the nation can avoid the loss of a construction season. I support your proposed \$375 billion highway and transit program (H.R. 3550) and suggest that it be funded through a combination of enhanced user fees and innovative funding mechanisms. However in light of the recent approval of the Senate Highway Bill (S. 1072) for \$318 billion and President Bush's recent announcement regarding no increases in transportation funding, I fully support expeditious floor action by the House on the Senate Bill if this will ensure a greater chance of success in all Branches for continued highway funding and provide a much needed boost for our Nation's economy.

We are confident that Congress will act quickly.

Respectfully,
