



June 9, 2014

Senator Timothy Johnson, Chair
Committee on Banking, Housing and
Urban Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Representative William Schuster, Chair
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Michael Crapo, Ranking
Member
Committee on Banking, Housing and
Urban Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Nick Rahall, Ranking
Member
Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Johnson, Chair Schuster, Ranking Member Crapo and Ranking Member Rahall:

The undersigned 26 members of the Senior Transportation Task Force (STTF), the only national coalition focused on transportation issues of critical importance to our nation's older adults, and other supporting organizations urge you to support these top priorities, listed below, as the 113th Congress considers and advances authorization of highway and transit programs.

The number of older adults has increased 15 percent in the past ten years to almost 38 million. Moreover, that number is expected to grow to 55 million by 2020 and 65 million by 2030—a staggering increase of nearly 60 percent over the current population. Seniors represent the fastest-growing demographic in this country. Coupled with longevity, is a greater interest among older adults to participate in the work force, to age-in-place, and to access necessary social and health services. Without adequate transportation, older adults risk isolation or institutionalization.

The STTF is a coalition of organizations focused on aging, disability, health care, faith-based, transit and labor issues, and its members collectively advance senior transportation issues during authorization of highway and transit programs. The Senior Transportation Task Force urges adoption of the following recommendations in the reauthorization bill.

- **Strong investments in public transit:** Make major new investments in public transportation that are urgently needed. Older adults rely on public transportation for employment, independence, engagement in community life, and more. Expanding transportation options will significantly improve the mobility of older adults. This is particularly true for transit programs serving rural and tribal communities.
- **Senior transit programs:** Boost funding for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 program that supports transit accessibility and provides services to promote mobility and independence for seniors.

Additionally, increase funding for operating assistance under this important program.

- **Senior transportation services evaluation:** Ensure 5310 program information is publicly available through an integrated national database, and that program performance measures are targeted and accurately reflect both the value of and gaps in transit access for older adults. Authorize a study by the General Accountability Office (GAO) or other neutral party to better identify, understand and document the unmet needs of older adults in all FTA programs.
- **Technical assistance for senior transportation programs:** Increase funding for targeted technical assistance and training activities, specifically for the National Center on Senior Transportation (NCST). Additionally, transfer the funding for this critical program into the Highway Trust Fund. This growth and stability will allow further demonstration, outreach, training, and technical assistance activities to meet the increasing needs of older adults and transit providers.
- **Service coordination with local planning agencies:** Provide incentives and support for further coordination of transit and other human services programs by strengthening accountability and transparency of planning processes and integrating transportation and transit planning into broader community and Aging Network planning efforts.
- **Mobility management:** Invest in mobility management solutions to better help transit and human services systems meet the needs of older adults.
- **Safe streets for all:** Address the disproportionate share of older adult pedestrian fatalities by directing states and metropolitan planning organizations to adopt policies that ensure the needs of all users, including seniors, are taken into account in planning, constructing and operating federally funded roads.

If you or your staff would like more information, please contact Jennifer Dexter with Easter Seals (jdexter@easterseals.com) and Autumn Campbell with the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (acampbell@n4a.org).

Sincerely,

AARP
Alliance for Retired Americans
American Society on Aging (ASA)
Association for Gerontology and Human Development in Historically
Black Colleges and Universities (AGHDHBCU)
Association of Jewish Aging Services (AJAS)
B'nai B'rith International
Easter Seals
International Association for Indigenous Aging (IA2)
LeadingAge



Lutheran Services in America
National Asian Pacific Center on Aging (NAPCA)
National Association for Hispanic Elderly
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers
National Association of RSVP Directors (NARSVPD)
National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD)
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM)
National Council on Aging (NCOA)
National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA)
National Indian Council on Aging, Inc.
National Senior Citizens Law Center (NSCLC)
OWL-The Voice of Midlife and Older Women
Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE)
State Long-term Care Ombudsman
The Jewish Federation of North America (JFNA)

cc: Members of the Senate Banking Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation and
Community Development and the House Transportation and Infrastructure
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit