



September 25, 2015

The Honorable Bill Shuster
2268 Rayburn
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Shuster:

On behalf of the members of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry, the largest, broad-based business advocacy association in the Commonwealth, I am writing to urge you to work with your fellow members of Pennsylvania's federal delegation to support comprehensive, long-term, sustainable transportation funding legislation that is based on a user-pays model and that ensures that the railways of our state and nation remain viable and efficient for the long-term.

A well-maintained, efficient system of transportation infrastructure is vital to the economy of Pennsylvania and the safety of its citizens. Pennsylvania's key industries, including agriculture, manufacturing and construction, rely on a predictable, funding partnership between state and federal government to support such infrastructure.

In 2013, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed comprehensive transportation legislation that invested in all facets of the state's infrastructure, served as a model for other states to follow, and was supported by members of both parties and a diverse group of stakeholders. Pennsylvania also relies on federal funding for more than 40% of its transportation infrastructure investments. This funding comes from the federal Highway Trust Fund, which has in recent years repeatedly come close to insolvency only to be financed by short-term extensions. It is vital to Pennsylvania's businesses and industry that Congress enacts a comprehensive, long-term funding solution that provides revenues from the users of the transportation system. The PA Chamber also supports legislative efforts to reduce regulatory hurdles for transportation planners and developers and to implement reforms to prevailing wage for transportation projects.

As Congress works to pass a long-term highway bill, it is also imperative that two key policy items are included: expanded permitting streamlining and a reasonable extension of positive train control (PTC) technology mandates. Rail has helped to position our state's many and various industries in a global leadership position, as it connects our members to domestic and foreign markets. Several regions of the state are currently reconnecting or boosting their rail connectivity, with freight railroads moving everything from automobiles and natural resources to everyday consumer products, produce and livestock. Intermodal operations are increasing around the state including Franklin County, the Lehigh Valley and Pittsburgh. Pennsylvania is fortunate to be served by Norfolk Southern, CSX and over 50 short line and regional railroads.

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The public and private sectors are committing considerable resources in the near future to modernize investments in rail, and it is important that crucial investment capital is not lost in a needlessly time-consuming permitting process. To that end, the PA Chamber requests your support in extending the same permit streamlining to rail projects that MAP-21 currently affords to highway and transit projects. Further, the safety of our rail infrastructure is paramount. The PA Chamber also requests you support a reasonable five-year extension to the deadline for full implementation of positive train control technology for the freight railroads. More time is needed to ensure safe and effective implementation of this important technology. Freight railroads have invested \$5 billion dollars developing and installing this technology and are expected to spend another \$4.5 billion to complete the system. A rushed or flawed PTC implementation would mean a less efficient and clogged rail network impacting local customers and consumers.

In closing, on behalf of the members of the PA Chamber, thank you again for your attention to these key issues, your consideration of our position on them, and your continued support of a sustainable transportation funding solution.

Sincerely,



Gene Barr
President and CEO