

May 19, 2026

The Honorable Sam Graves, Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Rick Larsen, Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen:

On behalf of the Alliance for Innovation and Infrastructure (Aii), thank you for your bipartisan leadership in developing the BUILD America 250 Act. Aii supports the Committee's effort to advance a timely, bipartisan reauthorization. Surface transportation is one of the most consequential issues before Congress and will shape the movement of commerce nationwide.

Aii appreciates the opportunity to review the bill before markup. In our spring report, [*Building Smarter, Safer Systems*](#), Aii urged Congress to approach reauthorization as an opportunity to improve measurable performance, encourage innovation, strengthen accountability, and clarify the federal purpose. The BUILD America 250 Act is an important step toward those goals.

Areas of Support

The bill makes important progress on project delivery and environmental review. Critical infrastructure projects face rising costs, strained workforces, and complex permitting that can add years to timelines. Federal review should protect important public interests while avoiding unnecessary delay. The BUILD America 250 Act's project delivery reforms, including expanded categorical exclusions, improved interagency coordination, programmatic agreements, and clearer review procedures, recognize that time itself is a cost in infrastructure development.

Aii also supports the Build America Bureau making technical assistance available as needed and as directed by the Secretary, particularly where assistance improves project finance, risk assessment, delivery readiness, and access to existing federal credit tools.

The Committee also deserves credit for the bill's attention to data, evaluation, and program effectiveness. Studies and reporting provisions related to discretionary grant effectiveness, formula program performance, data quality, highway safety, and freight movement can help improve future decision-making. These provisions will be most valuable if evaluation feeds back into future funding, eligibility, program design, and regulatory decisions so that federal policy can learn from evidence rather than simply document activity.

Aii is also encouraged by the bill's attention to freight efficiency, truck parking, digital infrastructure, and technology deployment. Congress should continue examining operational inefficiencies across freight networks, including detention, bottlenecks, intermodal transfer delays, cargo theft, and other avoidable disruptions. Data-informed policy in these areas can reduce costs for carriers, shippers, workers, consumers, and the broader economy.

Aii is especially encouraged by provisions that move transportation policy toward performance-based decision-making. Across modes, federal policy should be grounded in data, science, risk analysis, and measurable outcomes rather than static mandates or prescriptive rules. Safety and innovation should not be treated as competing objectives. This principle is especially important in rail, where policy should be guided by transparent data and evidence rather than short-term pressure or unsupported mandates. Given the complexity of the issues under discussion, Aii believes rail reform is better addressed in dedicated legislation. If rail provisions are narrowed or separated from this reauthorization, Congress should preserve the core principle that future rail safety legislation must remain data-driven, technology-neutral, and performance-focused.

Opportunities to Build on the Bill

As the bill proceeds, Aii encourages the Committee to remain focused on the federal purpose of surface transportation policy, which should be tailored to national priorities, especially the free flow of interstate commerce. Many infrastructure priorities are vital, but not all are primarily federal in character. Some are better addressed at the local, state, or regional level, where decision-makers are closer to the assets, users, tradeoffs, and operational realities involved.

This distinction is also important for private innovation. Much of America's transportation infrastructure is shaped by private-sector involvement. For regional and locally focused projects, public-private partnerships and other risk-mitigating innovative delivery can help stretch limited public dollars, improve lifecycle accountability, and allocate risk to the parties best positioned to manage it. These tools are not universal solutions, but when structured carefully to protect the public interest, they can improve stewardship and allow projects to benefit from private-sector expertise in planning, financing, delivery, operations, and maintenance.

Aii also notes the opportunity to further strengthen Private Activity Bonds (PABs), a proven tool for attracting private capital into public-purpose infrastructure projects involving risk transfer, revenue-backed financing, or public-private partnership structures. Although PAB authority is rooted in the tax code and requires coordination with the House Committee on Ways and Means, transportation PABs have long been part of surface transportation policy. Congress added highway and surface freight transfer facilities to PAB eligibility through SAFETEA-LU and later increased the national limitation amount through the IIJA. Aii encourages the Committee to work with Ways and Means to ensure PAB authority, private capital tools, and related financing mechanisms are considered as part of surface transportation reauthorization, including whether the current national limitation should be increased to avoid constraining future use.

Finally, the Highway Trust Fund remains a long-term challenge. The BUILD America 250 Act recognizes that the revenue model must evolve and makes modest progress through EV and hybrid registration fees and revenue-related pilots. Still, the structural imbalance and impending insolvency remain unresolved. The Trust Fund challenge is not only a revenue question; it is also a governance question. Congress should continue evaluating what the Trust Fund is intended to finance, which responsibilities are truly federal, and how future revenues can be tied more directly to system performance and public value.

Aii supports the work on the BUILD America 250 Act and thanks the Committee members, staff, and USDOT personnel advancing this reauthorization before the September deadline. The bill rightly emphasizes safety, performance, project delivery, finance, freight, and innovation.

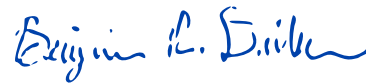
As the process continues, Aii encourages Congress to continue pursuing clear federal purpose, measurable outcomes, responsible stewardship, and evidence-based policy.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to strengthening America's infrastructure.

Sincerely,



Brigham A. McCown
Founder, Chairman, CEO
Alliance for Innovation and Infrastructure



Benjamin R. Dierker
Executive Director
Alliance for Innovation and Infrastructure