



National Association of Regional Councils

660 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 440

Washington, DC 20001

202.986.1032

www.NARC.org

May 19, 2026

The Honorable Sam Graves

Chairman

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

United States House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen

Ranking Member

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

United States House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen,

On behalf of the National Association of Regional Councils, the elected officials on our Board of Directors, and the regional planning organizations we represent across the nation, I write to express our gratitude for your leadership on the BUILD America 250 Act. Your bipartisan efforts on surface transportation reauthorization reflect a shared commitment to strengthening America's infrastructure and meeting the needs of local and regional communities across the country.

We are particularly grateful for the provisions that enhance the work of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Increased federal share for Metropolitan Planning (PL) funding will continue to help MPOs to carry out critical planning activities while easing local match requirements. In addition, the expanded eligible uses of planning funds—including support for project development, technical assistance, and data-driven decision-making—recognize the evolving role MPOs play in delivering efficient, multimodal transportation systems. Finally, the ability for MPOs to serve as direct recipients of PL funds and extend the obligation limitation period for PL, will empower regions to more effectively carry out the critical work of planning long-range transportation plans and Transportation Investment Plans to plan for their communities' futures. These are significant and welcome enhancements that address the needs of Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

We also applaud the Committee's efforts to bolster local and regional governments more broadly. The creation of the new formula and competitive bridge programs will help the local communities and counties served by MPOs in the most essential transportation work: to repair and replace deteriorated infrastructure. The formula program's set-asides for off-system bridges and locally-owned bridges address important concerns of local governments, combined with the federal cost share of up to 95% for those projects, will make it easier for local jurisdictions to advance repairs and replacements that might otherwise be unaffordable. In addition, the competitive bridge program creates opportunities for larger, regionally significant projects to move forward. We also appreciate the critical role that other grant programs such as Safe Streets



National Association of Regional Councils

660 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 440

Washington, DC 20001

202.986.1032

www.NARC.org

and Roads for All and the new Surface Transportation Accelerator Grant program play for communities and are grateful to see their inclusion.

Equally important are provisions to streamline project delivery. By improving environmental review processes and clarifying pathways for efficient approvals, the BUILD America 250 Act will help regions move critical projects from concept to construction more quickly and effectively, saving time, resources, and taxpayer dollars.

As the Committee continues its work, building on this strong foundation will enhance the bill's ability to help Metropolitan Planning Organizations meet the growing infrastructure needs facing metropolitan regions and communities nationwide. Sustained investment levels will remain key to fully realizing the promise of these important reforms.

The BUILD America 250 Act recognizes the important work that MPOs undertake and equips them with new resources while strengthening the partnership between federal, state, and local transportation leaders. By investing in MPOs, regions, and local governments, this legislation lays the groundwork for modernizing infrastructure, enhancing safety, and delivering the infrastructure that communities nationwide most want and need.

Your leadership sets a strong and collaborative tone for advancing a bill of this magnitude. We appreciate your commitment to bipartisan policymaking and to ensuring that regional voices continue to remain an important part of the surface reauthorization process. We look forward to working with you as the legislation advances.

Sincerely,

Erich Zimmermann
Executive Director
National Association of Regional Councils