



National Association of Regional Councils

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November 15, 2007

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member, Appropriations Committee
U.S. Senate
S-131 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cochran,

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) strongly urges the prompt passage, broad support and necessary override of any veto of the FY2008 Transportation-HUD appropriations bill (HR 3074) conference report, which would provide the much needed surface transportation and housing funds for critical projects in states, regions and local communities throughout the country.

NARC, representing local elected officials, Councils of Government (COGs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), serves as the national voice for regionalism – advocating regional cooperation as the most effective way to address community planning, development and infrastructure issues. COGs and MPOs are responsible for billions of dollars in transportation and housing planning and programming each year, coordinating regional projects and operations throughout the country. There is an immediate need in regional agencies for adequate funding, as well as the necessary authority, to maintain and improve critical transportation and housing infrastructure that directly impacts citizens and businesses. Without the urgent appropriation and delivery of these funds, infrastructure deficiencies that cut across city, county and, often times, state boundaries will begin to have a negative impact on our communities.

As we are all aware, our country's transportation system is at a crossroads. Purchasing power and funds continue to dwindle as infrastructure needs for basic maintenance and demands for increased capacity overwhelm an aging multimodal system. Likewise, housing investments are needed to foster continued prosperity and success for families and businesses in our local communities. With a lack of quality, affordable housing and an inefficient transportation system, our country will be unable to compete in a global marketplace, sustain jobs, and strengthen the overall national economy.

Significant attention and funding at all levels of government only stands to improve the safety, environment, interconnectivity and commerce of our regions and nation as a whole. We appreciate your dedication and leadership to these important issues and we offer our assistance. Feel free to contact me at any time at 202.986.1032, x.216 or fred@narc.org. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Fred Abousleman
Interim Executive Director