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Congress of the United States
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Washington, DC 20515

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June 18, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As a member of the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations Subcommittee overseeing these funds, I write to share my priorities for this year. As a Member of Congress who represents part of California's Inland Empire, a transportation and logistics hub, I prioritize investing in infrastructure that provides access to affordable, reliable transportation options to my constituents. The ***Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Law*** (Public Law 117-58), combined with annual federal funding, presents a unique opportunity to invest in our aging infrastructure and ensure disadvantaged communities are not left behind. I strongly support your efforts to equitably build up our nation's transportation, which allows constituents to access the jobs, housing, and recreational space they need to thrive.

This year I am working in Congress to include:

- Funding for eight community projects in my congressional district.
- As mentioned in your budget request to Congress, a shared priority is ensuring funding for the Thriving Communities Grant program. For the FY2022 enacted bill, I supported the creation of the Thriving Communities Initiative, which provided \$25 million for DOT and \$5 million for HUD. The program is not just essential, but it has the potential to transform districts like mine. It will foster equitable economic growth, reduce transportation cost-burden, improve public health and mobility, and increase access to economic opportunity. For FY2025, I will work in Congress to provide funding for this much-needed program. I introduced the Thriving Communities Act of 2024 (HR 8486) to support these efforts and support this grant program.
- Support for the Regional Infrastructure Accelerators program, which helps leverage Department of Transportation (DOT) funding by providing assistance to regional entities as they develop transportation infrastructure programs and projects that could be eligible for DOT credit assistance. I included authorization for this program in the 2015 *Fast Act* (Public Law 114-94), and funding has been noticed throughout the last two years.
- Transit-Oriented-Development policies that support the synergetic relationship between affordable housing and transportation development. My legislation, the *Sustainable Communities Act* (HR 927), works to ensure an all-government approach to supporting localities in providing more transportation options, developing more affordable housing, and improving the livability of communities. I look forward to working with you on this initiative

and continuing to lead it in Congress. I recently introduced the *Transit-Oriented Development Act of 2024* (HR 8486) to continue supporting your efforts to advance this grant.

- In 2023, there were 3,373 pedestrians killed in traffic crashes¹. On average, pedestrians in California, Florida and Texas accounted for 37% of all pedestrian deaths in the first six months of 2023. My District is the 14th most dangerous metropolitan area in the United States for pedestrians. My legislation, H.R. 6111, the *Pedestrian Hazard, Awareness and Safety Expansion (PHASE) Act*, works to reverse this dangerous trend and directs the Department of Transportation to conduct a study on developing physical alternatives to better protect pedestrians. It would also create a grant program for cities and municipalities to implement pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. To support this initiative, I am requesting the inclusion of \$10 million in funding for a pilot grant program at the Department of Transportation called the PHASE Grant Program.
- As a major transportation and logistics hub with multiple freeways, railyards, and an international airport, my District has one of the worst air qualities in the country. As an integral component of the supply chain ecosystem, we experience severe congestion and air quality degradation when disruptions occur at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, when communities across the country were breathing in the best air, my District was not. There was a gridlock of idling ships along the coast. Due to this issue, there were trucks idling and a buildup on the streets in my District. This congestion from the ships and trucks contributed to the worst air quality my District has experienced. Notably, during wildfire season, my constituents breathe in ash, smog, and smoke. That is why, for FY2025, I am prioritizing ensuring transit options in the areas of the country with the worst air quality.
- Finally, standardizing and improving the delivery of high-quality T-CPR instructions will save as many as 13,000 lives annually in the United States. Within 3 minutes, all 9-1-1 emergency medical telecommunicators should be able to identify a suspected cardiac arrest and provide instructions to bystanders on starting compression-only CPR. Immediate bystander CPR can double or triple a cardiac arrest victim's chance of survival. In communities where 9-1-1 emergency medical telecommunicators provide high-quality T-CPR instructions, the bystander CPR rate can increase by as much as 50%. High-quality T-CPR will strengthen the chain of survival and give emergency medical responders a better chance of success when they arrive on the scene of a cardiac arrest. Unfortunately, only seven states require T-CPR training for all their 9-1-1 emergency dispatchers. For FY2025, I will work to prioritize funding for CPR training for dispatchers.

I hope you will consider me a partner in your efforts to improve our nation's infrastructure and ensure that everyone has accessible transportation in their community.

Sincerely,



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress

¹ <https://www.ghsa.org/resources/Pedestrians24>