

May 14, 2009

Dear Colleague:

I invite you to join me in sending a letter to Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Jim Oberstar, Ranking Member John Mica, Highway and Transit Subcommittee Chairman Pete DeFazio and Ranking Member Jimmy Duncan urging increased support for bicycling in the upcoming surface transportation authorization bill.

There is growing national interest in bicycling, and there is a wide array of public benefits that are derived from non-motorized transportation. Increased bicycling opportunities can reduce congestion, improve mobility, enhance quality of life and livable communities, and promote recreational and healthy activities. While federal support and program integration for bicycling has improved greatly since 1991 - increasing above one-percent of funding in recent years - the new authorization of the surface transportation program provides an opportunity to build upon this progress.

The letter I am sending makes four specific policy requests. First, the letter urges inclusion of a Complete Streets policy in the reauthorization. This would ensure that the planning and development of new transportation infrastructure projects with federal funds includes and integrates safe, measurable and enabling opportunities for non-motorized transit options. Second, the letter requests better physical integration of roads, sidewalks, bike paths and transit systems in order to create seamless networks that are safe, accessible and effectively link communities together for all transportation users. This would enable more trips - for pleasure, to work or school, for shopping, etc. - to be safely made by bicycle. Third, there is a need to better distribute highway safety funds in proportion to fatalities. Bicyclists and pedestrians comprise 13 percent of roadway fatalities, but less than one percent of highway safety funds are allocated are targeted to these modes of transportation. Shifting funds to programs that support bicycling safety, education and infrastructure improvements can reduce non-motorized roadway accidents, and will make these forms of transportation safer and more viable. Finally, it requests increased funding for the Safe Routes to School program, as well as some program improvements, that will enable safer and expanded bicycling opportunities for student travel between home and school.

I appreciate your consideration of joining me in promoting bicycling in the surface transportation reauthorization bill. In order to sign on to this letter, or if you have any questions, please contact Eric Lausten of my office at 5-5701, or via email at eric.lausten@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

DANIEL W. LIPINSKI

Member of Congress