Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dave Camp (R-MI)
House Ways & Means, Chair
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sander Levin (D-MI)
House Ways & Means, Ranking Member
1106 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Dreier (R-CA)
House Rules Committee, Chair
H-312 House Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Louise Slaughter
House Rules Committee, Ranking Member
1627 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members,

We write to ask that you make in order or include in a manager's package an amendment restoring parity between the pre-tax transit and parking benefits to any surface transportation reauthorization bill considered on the House floor.

Beginning January 1, 2012, transit riders who use the transit portion of the commuter benefit saw the cost of their commute rise because the monthly cap on the transit benefit was reduced from $230 per month to $125 per month -- almost a 50% drop. Meanwhile, people who drive to work and park their car received an increase in their monthly benefit from $230 month to $240 month. Failure to pass legislation to extend parity between the transit and parking benefit at the end of 2011 results in a failed policy that rewards drivers and punishes transit riders.

If we do not act quickly, millions of middle-class transit and vanpool riders who generally live in suburban settings and have the longest and most expensive commutes will continue to be taxed more than their fellow commuters who drive alone to work. This inequity will force many commuters out of trains, buses, and vanpools, and back into their cars leading to increases in congestion, fuel consumption, lost production and wasted time.

The transit benefit also provides small businesses and job creators with a financial incentive to help their employees increase their disposable income. This is a perfect example of how targeted and effective federal policy can provide employers with an opportunity to help their employees save money on their commute. The money saved by these small businesses and job creators can be reinvested in their businesses to create new jobs.

We should not continue to promote a policy that hurts businesses that are doing the right thing by providing their employees with transportation alternatives. We support the inclusion of language re-establishing parity between the transit and parking benefits in any long-term surface transportation reauthorization bill.

Respectfully,

RANDY HULTGREN
Member of Congress

MIKE QUIGLEY
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

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