November 3, 2015

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bill Shuster  
Chair, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2251 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2164 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan, Minority Leader Pelosi, Chairman Shuster, and Ranking Member DeFazio:

On behalf of the nation’s governors, state legislatures and state departments of transportation, we urge Congress to oppose Amendment #131, submitted by Illinois Representative Rodney Davis and Nevada Representative Dina Titus, to the Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform (STRR) Act of 2015 because this amendment would divert $5 billion in critical transportation dollars from the states.

Under this provision, the local government allocation of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) would increase from 50 percent under current law to 55 percent in fiscal year 2016, gradually ramping up to 60 percent by fiscal year 2021. Conversely, the state share of STBGP would be reduced from 45 percent in 2016 to 40 percent in 2021.

We oppose the transfer of federal transportation program dollars away from states because:

- Most highway travel occurs on state-owned and operated routes: States own, operate and maintain 100 percent of the Interstate Highway System and more than 95 percent of the miles on the National Highway System (NHS); 80 percent of truck traffic and a majority of all travel occur on the NHS.
- Projects of national and regional significance could be at risk if critically needed funds are diverted.
- States have demonstrated expertise in efficiently delivering federally funded projects.
- States are ultimately held accountable for setting and meeting performance targets under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act and the STRR Act.
- The federally assisted, state implemented surface transportation program has a proven track record of success over the past 100 years.
• The current planning process provides for robust dialogue between state and local governments to meet investment needs at the federal, state and local level.

We urge Congress to not lose sight of the national purpose of the federal transportation program, especially at a time of limited federal transportation funding.

Sincerely,

Dan Crippen
Executive Director
National Governors Association

William T. Pound
Executive Director
National Conference of State Legislatures

Bud Wright
Executive Director
American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials