

Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors

Goods Movement Coalition Applauds House Freight Investment Proposal

House Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015 invests nearly \$4.5 billion in freight infrastructure

WASHINGTON, DC (October 16, 2015) – The Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors (CAGTC) applauds Chairman Shuster (R-PA), Ranking Member DeFazio (D-OR) and members of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for committing to investment in freight infrastructure in their proposal released today, which is scheduled for consideration by the Committee on Thursday, October 22. The Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015 guarantees investment of \$4.46 billion in highway freight infrastructure, including railway-highway crossings and grade separation projects, over a six year period, to be distributed through a competitive grant process, with as much as \$500 million available for projects on other modes. A wide variety of state and local governmental entities would be eligible to apply for funding. Since its founding, CAGTC has supported a competitive grant approach to freight infrastructure funding with broad modal and applicant eligibility.

In addition to prioritizing critical goods movement infrastructure, the proposal also creates a multimodal freight policy and network that encompass the many modes necessary to moving freight. The bill improves upon MAP-21's highway-centric Primary Freight Network by calling for an increase in total mileage from 27,000 to 41,000.

"As the backbone of U.S. commerce, freight infrastructure occupies a special place in our transportation system. Accordingly, we should place great importance on the investment needed to ensure that our multimodal system can carry the goods produced by our manufacturers, farmers, industrial suppliers and other sectors as we strive to expand exports," said CAGTC President Leslie Blakey. "Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member DeFazio and their fellow Committee members deserve much credit for calling for dependable, unprecedented levels of investment in our national freight network."

The proposal reflects many recommendations made by the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure's bipartisan Special Panel on 21st Century Freight Transportation. The Panel, initiated by Chairman Shuster and led by Congressman John J. Duncan (R-TN) and Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), correctly noted in its 2013 recommendations, "improving the efficient and safe flow of freight across all modes of transportation is critical to the health of the United States economy and the future of the Nation's global competitiveness." For this reason, the Panel called for "robust public investment in all modes" and recommended that Congress use a competitive grant approach to "authorize dedicated, sustainable funding for multimodal freight."

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"Freight is a hallmark of the Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015 and I applaud the Committee for prioritizing investment in our goods movement system," said Elaine Nettle, Executive Director of CAGTC. "Our freight network's economic potential is waiting to be unlocked through robust investment and this proposal outlines a plan that will benefit our nation for years to come. We look forward to working with the Committee on their significant freight proposal as the process of developing a holistic surface transportation authorization continues."

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About the Coalition

The Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors (CAGTC) is a diverse coalition of more than 60 public and private organizations dedicated to increasing federal investment in America's intermodal freight infrastructure. In contrast to single mode interests, CAGTC's main mission is to promote a seamless goods movement transportation system across all modes to enhance capacity and economic growth. For more information on the Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors, please visit www.tradecorridors.org.