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Statement by CAGTC Board of Directors Chairman Sharon Neely:
Goods Movement Coalition Applauds House Passage of Freight Program in Surface Transportation Bill

WASHINGTON, DC (October 5, 2015) – The House of Representatives today passed a bipartisan, long-term surface transportation proposal containing significant funding for freight infrastructure. The Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act (STRAA) dedicates $4.46 billion to freight over the bill’s six-year term, distributed through a competitive grant program. Up to $500 million is eligible for intermodal and freight rail projects that benefit highway users.

Since the bill was approved by the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee last week, the freight program was improved through an amendment offered by Congressmen Costello (R-PA) and Lipinski (D-IL), and supported by the Coalition for America’s Gateways and Trade Corridors (CAGTC), that allows small and mid-sized freight projects to compete for intermodal and freight rail funding. Projects totaling over $100 million already had this ability under the T&I Committee’s mark.

CAGTC Board of Directors Chairman Sharon Neely commended STRRA development and passage, saying:

“I applaud Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) and Ranking Member Peter DeFazio (D-OR) for recognizing the role our nation’s freight network plays in supporting our global economic competitiveness by providing nearly $4.5 billion for meritorious freight infrastructure projects. The Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act targets our nation’s most problematic freight chokepoints by awarding funding through a merit-based, freight-specific competitive grant – an approach CAGTC has long championed. These investments will pay dividends to U.S. manufacturers, farmers, and all goods-moving industries.”

In addition to providing much-needed investment in freight infrastructure, STRRA improves existing National Freight Policy by making it multimodal and more reflective of real-world goods movement and supply chains. The House now joins the Senate and Administration in producing proposals that concentrate resources in our nation’s multimodal goods movement network through a competitive grant approach. CAGTC has advocated for a multimodal grant program, with a minimum annual investment of $2 billion, since its establishment in 2001.

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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.