

**Bill:** H.R. 2410

**Author:** U.S. Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR)

**Status:** Jointly referred to House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, House Committee on Energy and Commerce, House Committee on Ways and Means, House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, House Committee on Natural Resources, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House Committee on Budget, and House Committee on Rules

**Position:** Support

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board adopt a **SUPPORT** position on H.R. 2410 – The Grow America Act.

### **SUMMARY**

**H.R.2410 (DeFazio)** – The GROW America Act would, if enacted into federal law, authorize a six-year \$478 billion surface transportation bill. H.R. 2410 represents President Obama’s surface transportation bill that his Administration transmitted to Congress through his Fiscal Year 2016 Budget. The authorized funding level of \$478 billion in the bill is the same funding figure that the U.S. Department of Transportation has determined is needed to fund our nation’s state-of-good-repair backlog maintenance and to invest in new transportation projects required to properly address America’s future population growth.

Co-sponsors of H.R. 2410 from the Los Angeles Congressional Delegation include Congresswoman Grace Napolitano (D-32) and Congresswoman Julia Brownley (D-26).

### **ISSUE**

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, the United States has an \$846 billion funding gap for surface transportation infrastructure. Since 2012, federal funding for surface transportation programs have been flat and the current debate happening in Congress regarding the reauthorization of surface transportation programs has only focused on funding programs at current levels, as authorized by MAP-21.

## **DISCUSSION**

Greater investment in infrastructure nationwide is supported by a wide range of organizations including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the AFL-CIO. It is widely understood by economists and the business community that a strong infrastructure is needed for the United States to remain economically competitive and provide an enhanced quality of life for all Americans.

The GROW AMERICA Act would seek to make significant investments over a six year period in:

- **Highways** – provides \$317 billion for programs under the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), an increase of 29 percent over current levels.
- **Freight** – dedicates \$18 billion of highway funds for a new dedicated multi-modal freight program.
- **Transit** – provides \$115 billion for programs under the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), an increase of 76 percent over current levels, and significantly boosts New Starts funding.
- **Rail** – provides \$28.6 billion for programs under the Federal Rail Administration (FRA).
- **Safety** – provides \$6 billion for vehicle safety programs under the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), \$4.7 billion for truck and bus safety programs under the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), and \$16 billion for the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).
- **Competitive Grants** – provides \$7.5 billion for TIGER grants and \$6 billion for TIFIA that could support \$60 billion in loans.
- **Research and Innovation** – provides \$3.4 billion to leverage research and innovation to move people and goods more safely and efficiently, while minimizing impacts on the environment.

## **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

Staff has reviewed this proposal and has determined that the legislation could have a favorable impact on safety by providing additional funds for federal rail, highway and other safety programs.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Staff has determined this bill would have a positive impact our agency by providing a larger amount of available funding for transportation projects through federal formula funding programs and other discretionary grant programs, like the TIGER grant program.

## **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

There is no other legislation currently pending in Congress that, like this bill, provides a framework for a long term surface transportation authorization bill funded at such a high level.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Should the Board decide to SUPPORT H.R.2410, staff will draft a support letter and work with the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation to advocate for the GROW America Act to be adopted by Congress and signed into law by the President.