



April 25, 2025

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rick Crawford
Chairman
Highways and Transit Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
Ranking Member
Highways and Transit Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, Chairman Crawford and Ranking Member Holmes Norton:

On behalf of the American Bus Association (ABA), I would like to express our sincere appreciation to you both for your bipartisan leadership and commitment in swiftly beginning the highway reauthorization process. Your efforts in addressing the nation's infrastructure needs are commendable, and we value the opportunity to engage with the subcommittee on these critical issues.

The ABA is the leading national trade association representing the North American motorcoach, charter bus, group travel, and tourism industries — collectively generating over \$100 billion in economic activity annually and employing more than 500,000 Americans. ABA's mission is to connect people with places through an international network of bus and motorcoach operators, manufacturers, tour companies, tourism bureaus, destination venues, and those who love to travel.

Representing more than 2,000 motorcoach operators and group travel businesses, ABA is particularly focused on the issues of safety, access, infrastructure, and innovation within transportation. The motorcoach industry serves as a cornerstone of America's transportation network, providing safe, affordable, and sustainable options for hundreds of millions of passengers every year — whether traveling for leisure, business, or school. With nearly 400

million passenger trips taken on motorcoaches annually, the industry is not only vital for transportation but also for economic growth and community connectivity.

As Congress moves forward with reauthorizing the highway bill, we would like to highlight several key policy priorities critical to the future of the motorcoach industry and its continued contribution to the nation's transportation system:

1. Strengthen Rural and Urban Mobility through Smarter Investment

- Amend 49 U.S.C. §5311(f) to increase funding for intercity bus services, expand eligible expenses, eliminate the loss requirement, enhance transparency in the state certification process, and require an annual publication of certifications and waivers.
- Direct the Department of Transportation (DOT) to conduct a comprehensive study evaluating the return on investment of key rural and urban transportation programs, including cost per passenger, ridership levels, operational sustainability, and community outcomes.

2. Preserve the Motorcoach Recognition as a Provider of Mass Transportation While Securing the Highway Trust Fund

- Increase the current motorcoach fuel tax refund under 26 U.S.C. §4221.
- Ensure any fuel tax increases or alternative Highway Trust Fund (HTF) revenue mechanisms maintain proportional rebate eligibility.

3. Achieve Parity with Public Transit in Tolling and Congestion Management

- Support H.R. 2526, the Bus Equitable Access and Transparency (BEAT) Act.
- Amend 23 U.S.C. §129 to ensure privately operated motorcoaches receive the same toll rates, discounts, and access to bus lanes as public mass transit vehicles.

4. Ensure Enforcement of FTA Charter Bus Rules

- Direct the FTA to increase audits and oversight of public transit agencies' charter activities.
- Establish an independent review mechanism for violations, with penalties and annual reporting requirements.

5. Guarantee Reasonable Access to Federally Funded Transit Facilities

- Amend 49 U.S.C. §5323(r) to strengthen “reasonable access” requirements for private operators and mandate timely, transparent responses to access requests, with annual DOT reporting to Congress.

6. Clarify Federal Size and Weight Exemption for Motorcoaches

- Amend 23 U.S.C. §127 to clearly exempt motorcoaches from single axle weight limits below 24,000 pounds, ensuring consistent enforcement across all states.

7. Maintain Current Insurance Minimums for Motorcoach Operators

- Maintain existing minimum financial responsibility levels under 49 U.S.C. §31139 and reaffirm requirements for DOT study and public reporting before any proposed increases.

8. Modernize Motorcoach Regulatory and Operational Framework

- Dedicate 10% of MCSAP funds to motorcoach-specific inspections.
- Eliminate CDL testing delays, formally oversee the Training Provider Registry, approve the use of 529 savings for CDL testing, streamline CMV registration, and harmonize the definition of “bus” across federal agencies.
- Maintain current passenger carrier hours of service requirements and exemptions under federal labor regulations.
- Uphold the prohibition of unplanned enforcement stops for passenger carriers.

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide input on these important issues and look forward to working with the subcommittee to ensure that the motorcoach industry remains a critical component of the nation’s transportation infrastructure.

Thank you again for your leadership and dedication to reauthorizing the highway bill. We are eager to work with you in advancing these policy priorities.

Respectfully,



Callie Hoyt

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