



February 13, 2025

The Honorable Rick Crawford
Chairman, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Highways and Transit Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton
Ranking Member, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Highways and Transit Subcommittee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear 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.

As the national trade association representing over 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 that are critical to the future of the motorcoach industry and its continued contribution to the nation's transportation system. These priorities focus on improving access to bus services, promoting sensible safety practices, and ensuring a level playing field for private motorcoach operators.

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Improve and Expand Access to Bus Service

Position bus travel as a resilient and essential baseload mass transportation option.

1. Conduct further study into alternative Highway Trust Fund (HTF) revenue mechanisms that preserve the value of the fuel tax rebate for motorcoach operators while securing the long-term solvency to the HTF.
2. Expand and improve the Intercity Bus Program 5311(f) through increasing funding for terminal access and route miles and eliminating the loss requirement for operational subsidy to ensure intercity travel needs of rural communities are met.
3. Ensure parity for all privately operated motorcoaches with other modes of mass transportation, including public transit agencies, with respect to congestion mitigation programs and initiatives such as tolling and bus-only lanes.
4. Ensure compliance of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) charter bus regulations to prevent public transit agencies that receive federal subsidies from unfairly competing with private charter bus companies for business.

Promote Effective and Sensible Safety Practices and Regulations

Promote the industry's commitment to self-regulation as a foundation for advancing passenger, driver, and public safety, while advocating for balanced regulatory and legislative policies that support safety on our roadways.

5. Clarify the interpretation of current motorcoach size and weight federal exemption to ensure operators are not wrongfully penalized by state transportation authorities for non-compliance.
6. Maintain current minimum insurance liability limits to avoid imposing disproportionate financial burdens on operators without conclusively increasing safety outcomes.
7. Increase Bus Security Grant Program funding for motorcoach operations and expand grant funding allowable uses to include terminal security.
8. Simplify and modernize motorcoach registration and operational processes to improve efficiency, safety, and compliance while reducing costs and improving the customer experience.
 - Direct 10 percent of MCSAP funds for motorcoach inspections.
 - Eliminate CDL testing delays and formalize review of Training Provider Registry; use of 529 for CDL testing
 - Streamline CMV registration process
 - Harmonize definition of a bus in federal regulations



We are grateful for the opportunity to provide our input on these important issues, and we 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Callie Hoyt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Callie Hoyt
Senior Vice President of Public Affairs and Government Relations
American Bus Association