

Albert A. Rizzo, M.D.  
Chair  
National Board of Directors

June 22, 2012

Ross P. Lanzafame, Esq.  
Chair-Elect  
National Board of Directors

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
Chairman  
Committee on Environment & Public  
Works  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John L. Mica  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation &  
Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington DC 20515

H. James Gooden  
Past-Chair

Christine L. Bryant  
Secretary/Treasurer

Geri Reinardy, M.P.A.  
Speaker  
Nationwide Assembly

Re: Reauthorizing the Federal Surface Transportation Program

Marcia D. Williams, Ed.D.  
Speaker-Elect  
Nationwide Assembly

Dear Chairman Boxer and Chairman Mica:

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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President &  
Chief Executive Officer

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Transportation is essential to the growth and functioning of the U.S. economy and for the quality of life enjoyed in the United States. However, the transportation sector in the United States generates a significant share of the nation's air pollution, threatening the health and lives of millions of people, including those who are most vulnerable to harm. The American Lung Association believes that protection of lung health and the development of a sound 21<sup>st</sup> century U.S. transportation policy are compatible goals. As you work to develop a transportation bill the American Lung Association urges you to include critical provisions and policies that will promote public health and public participation.

The American Lung Association supports improved federal, state and local policies, planning and funding measures that reduce mobile source emissions through sustainable community planning and development, including programs to reduce transportation energy use and to provide greater transportation alternatives. The Lung Association supports the formulation, execution and enforcement of laws and policies to address those urgent needs, clean up contributing sources and reduce such exposures. As forty years of evidence has proven, cleaner air benefits public health and the economy, helping taxpayers, employers, and families.

Specifically, the Lung Association urges that the committee include these provisions in the conference agreement:

1. **Preserve funding for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) programs** and retain performance measure in the planning process to ensure that the projects identified for funding will help meet targets. Critical to communities

across the nation where unhealthy levels of air pollution threaten the health of their residents, CMAQ funding provides dedicated funding to local efforts to improve air quality and protect public health. The Lung Association opposes any proposals that would strip the focus from improving air quality for these funds to do other actions, such as expanding eligibility for single occupancy vehicle lane construction. Performance measures should include both long-range and short-term planning and program integration.

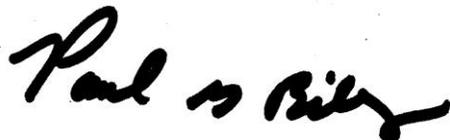
2. **Employ clean construction measures** in areas with unhealthy levels of particulate matter requiring and funding clean diesel equipment on construction projects. Projects paid for with public money should not harm public health. Clean diesel equipment and retrofits are readily available and can reduce life-threatening local pollution burdens. Newly manufactured diesel powered vehicles and equipment are becoming cleaner every day, but it will take decades to replace the older, dirty equipment unless more action is taken. Emissions from older equipment can be reduced by up to 85 percent with the installation of cost-effective technology. Not only will the community benefit, but neighbors to the project and the construction workers will suffer less health-threatening pollution.
3. **Promote the use of alternatives to driving, including provision for a full transportation network.** Surface transportation systems should adequately accommodate the needs of all users. A full transportation network includes widespread public transit, rail, bicycle and pedestrian access throughout the network and integrates all of these options in urban, suburban, rural and tribal communities. Public transit in particular provides an essential public health resource for families who too often lack other reliable access to grocery stores, pharmacies and medical care as well as work or play. The Lung Association supports provisions that would allow greater local flexibility to increase public transit funding including the option to use highway funds for public transit. The Lung Association supports retaining local control of funding safe bicycle and pedestrian projects to provide safe access for all communities.
4. **Preserve full public information and participation in project planning.** The public has a right to know about the health and environmental impacts of all transportation planning and projects, especially those paid for with taxpayer dollars. The Lung Association opposes provisions in H.R. 4348 that would prevent or reduce the ability of local communities and stakeholders, including those representing public health, to participate in planning or provide input to major transportation projects that could significantly impact the health of the community. Such provisions would reduce the transparency of the impacts of plans that guide transportation investments and meet future needs. In particular, the public deserves to have the environmental impacts of these projects fully reviewed as authorized under the National Environmental Policy Act.
5. **Retain national transportation goals and objectives** to ensure we are working to meet a national vision for our transportation system. Specifically we support retaining objectives to mitigate negative health impacts of transportation investments and freight movement. As the Health Effects Institute's 2010 report on near-roadway pollution showed, busy highways are surrounded a zone of elevated levels of pollution that contribute to health harm, including worsening asthma and other health effects,

including possibly new onset asthma.<sup>i</sup> For example, the California Air Resources Board Is examining what communities can do through their transportation systems to reduce pollution especially near-roadway exposures and in freight transportation.<sup>ii</sup> A national surface transportation and freight policy should improve transportation and goods movement while addressing the effects of that movement on impacted communities.

The American Lung Association supports the development of a transportation bill for the nation's surface transportation system that protects public health, particularly for those who are most at risk from air pollution: children and teenagers; older adults; people who suffer from lung disease, cardiovascular disease, or diabetes; people with low incomes; and people who work or are active outdoors. Reducing air pollution reduces the wide range of health harms, saves lives and provides proven economic benefits.

The American Lung Association urges the conference to ensure the same degree of protection for all from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to create a healthy environment in which to live, learn and work. The nation's investment in transportation must continue to reduce life-threatening air pollution and protect the health of all residents of all income levels. This development, implementation and enforcement of any impacts related to transportation planning and policy must also include the fair treatment and meaningful community involvement of all people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul G. Billings". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul G. Billings  
Vice President, National Policy and Advocacy

cc. The Honorable James Inhofe, Ranking Member, Environment & Public Works Committee  
The Honorable Nick J. Rahall, Ranking Member, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee  
Members of the Surface Transportation Bill Conference Committee

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<sup>i</sup> Health Effects Institute Panel on the Health Effects of Traffic-Related Air Pollution, *Traffic-Related Air Pollution: A Critical Review of the Literature on Emissions, Exposure, and Health Effects*. Health Effects Institute: Boston, 2010. Available at [www.healtheffects.org](http://www.healtheffects.org).

<sup>ii</sup> California Air Resources Board, 2011 Annual Research Plan, September 2011. Available at <http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/apr/apr.htm>