

**SMART GROWTH AMERICA
IN-DISTRICT ADVOCACY MEETINGS
AUGUST 2008**

Talking Points

- Introduce yourselves and your organization, mention BRIEFLY what your organization works on
- Say why you are there: We believe that the federal government needs to invest in transportation choices to provide people with options other than driving in the face of high gas prices. Our investments in the last 50 years have left many Americans in communities that require driving to get to the services or jobs we need.
- The next federal transportation bill gives us an opportunity to change this, and provide more Americans with walkable communities, complete streets to walk and bike on, and access to quality public transportation to escape high gas prices.
- We support several current bills that move us in the right direction:
 - **The Complete Streets Act of 2008 (Senate S. 2686/House H.R. 5951):** We need to provide for the one-third of Americans who do not drive as well as for the many Americans who no longer can afford to drive due to high gas prices—many of these people are elderly, or poor, or young—and without walking, biking, or transit, they have no opportunities for mobility. Millions of Americans are forced to walk and bike and catch the bus along roads that are not properly designed – most everyone has seen the pathways tramped in the grass alongside a major roadway. This is a problem on many levels, making our streets more dangerous and encouraging more people to drive everywhere—which means more congestion and more pollution, among other problems. The Complete Streets Act of 2008 (S. 2686 introduced by Senators Harkin (IA) and Carper (DE) or H.R. 5951 introduced by Rep. Matsui (CA)) would require states and MPOs to establish complete streets policies and apply them to federally-funded projects. Building complete streets will help address some of the most pressing issues facing our country—climate change and oil dependence, the obesity epidemic, air quality, safety, congestion, and many more by giving people transportation options and reducing our reliance on cars.

Make sure to provide local examples of how this affects people in your district:

- Give local examples of things like high transit ridership, more biking, transit service cuts due to energy costs
- What problems do you and your members face?
- What's been in the news lately?