

March 2, 2011

Daniel Inouye, Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
United States Capitol, Room S-128  
Washington, DC 20510

Thad Cochran, Vice Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
United States Capitol, Room S-206  
Washington, DC 20510

Patty Murray, Chair  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing, Urban Development,  
and Related Agencies  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 133  
Washington, DC 20510

Susan Collins, Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation Housing, Urban Development,  
and Related Agencies  
Hart Senate Office Building, Room 123  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Appropriations Leaders:

Congress' decisions about the federal budget can have immense implications for communities across America and their ability to rebuild local economies and improve fiscal stability. As you consider this year's difficult budget decisions, we, the undersigned group of concerned organizations, urge you to support the federal programs that keep communities strong, healthy and economically vibrant.

Specifically, we urge you to support the Partnership for Sustainable Communities and related grant programs in the FY11 continuing resolution and the FY12 appropriations process.

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities helps community leaders get the most out of each federal or state dollar invested in their neighborhoods. These programs make federal investments go even further by helping local leaders leverage private sector investment, save money in municipal budgets and by helping families save on things like transportation – all while creating jobs. Our organizations strongly support these programs, including:

- Continued funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Sustainable Communities Initiative, which provides Regional Planning Grants and Community Challenge Grants that help communities to leverage private sector investment, improve strategic growth, streamline regulatory barriers and make strategic investments with limited taxpayer dollars.
- Continued funding for the Department of Transportation's TIGER program in FY11, which strengthens the economy, creates jobs, reduces gridlock, and provides safe, low-cost transportation choices to our citizens.
- The full commitment of obligated funds to grants received by more than 87 regions around the country under the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Sustainable Communities Initiative and the Department of Transportation's TIGER program in FY09 and FY10.

We acknowledge that this year's budget decisions are difficult ones and that Congress needs to cut wasteful spending, but the Partnership for Sustainable Communities helps the federal government work smarter. The Partnership is a vital opportunity to effectively coordinate and leverage federal programs for the greatest long-term benefit to our communities. Cutting these programs would be a short-sighted solution to the budget shortfall, and one which would stunt the economic growth of regions currently benefitting from the program.

We urge you to support the Partnership for Sustainable Communities in the FY11 continuing resolution and the FY12 appropriations process.

For more information about Smart Growth America and the undersigned group of concerned organizations, please contact Jessica Holmberg at (202) 207-3355 ext. 121 or [jholmberg@smartgrowthamerica.org](mailto:jholmberg@smartgrowthamerica.org).

Sincerely,

American Institute of Architects  
American Planning Association  
American Public Transportation Association  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
Apollo Alliance  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Audubon International  
Center for Community Progress  
Center for Neighborhood Technology  
Center for Rural Strategies  
CEOs for Cities  
Coalition of Urban Serving Universities  
Congress for the New Urbanism  
Denver Housing Authority  
Enterprise Community Partners  
Environmental and Energy Study Institute  
Friends of the Earth  
Good News Mountaineer Garage  
Institute for Transportation and Development Policy  
International Downtown Association  
League of Rural Voters  
Local Government Commission  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation  
LOCUS: Responsible Real Estate Developers and Investors  
Low Income Investment Fund  
Mercy Housing  
Metropolitan Planning Council

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging  
National Association of Local Government Environment Professionals  
National Complete Streets Coalition  
National Fair Housing Alliance  
National Housing Conference  
National Housing Trust  
National Resources Defense Council  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
National Wildlife Federation  
OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon  
Oregon Public Health Institute  
Partnership for Working Families  
PolicyLink  
Prevention Institute  
Project for Public Spaces  
Public Health Law & Policy  
Quitman County Development Organization  
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy  
Reconnecting America  
RiverStone Health  
Safe States Alliance  
Sierra Club  
Smart Growth America  
Stewards of Affordable Housing for the Future  
Strategic Alliance for Healthy Food and Activity Environments  
The Partnership for Working Families  
TOD Associates  
TransForm  
Transportation for America  
U.S. Green Building Council  
U.S. PIRG  
Upstream Public Health

cc:

United States Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid  
Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell