



February 21, 2012

Honorable Michael Fitzpatrick  
1224 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Fitzpatrick:

I am writing to urge you to oppose H.R. 7, the proposed American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act of 2012. The bill represents an unprecedented attempt to gut federal funding for public transit and for road congestion relief, which are essential to meet the transportation needs of the Philadelphia Region.

As I am sure you are aware, H.R. 7 will end the 30 year bipartisan agreement that guaranteed mass transit 20% of the fuel taxes and user fees paid into the highway trust fund. This is a significant and essential source of predictable funding. In the year 2010 alone, it translated into \$8 billion for transit systems around the country.

The loss of dedicated transit funding is particularly troubling for the 8<sup>th</sup> District because this community, which includes parts of Philadelphia, depends on reliable access to jobs in the city core for its economic wellbeing. Many of SEPTA's Regional Rail lines run through the 8<sup>th</sup> District, and residents have come to rely on these lines to commute to their jobs. Increasing SEPTA's exposure to the uncertainty of the annual appropriations process will therefore seriously impede the economic health of the region.

The threat that H.R. 7 poses to Amtrak should also give you pause, particularly in light of your recent support for improvements to Amtrak service. The bill proposes to cut Amtrak's budget by 25%, which will surely undermine the improvements you recently helped bring to the Northeast Corridor. The 8<sup>th</sup> District is served by Amtrak stations and will see a reduction in its access to the rest of Amtrak's Northeast Corridor and Western Pennsylvania as a consequence of H.R. 7's severe cuts.

The bill contains other measures that will increase traffic congestion, which already chokes economic activity in the 8th District. H.R. 7 undercuts the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), which for over 20 years has relieved congestion by funding projects that divert drivers from single occupancy vehicles. The Philadelphia region has benefited from CMAQ funds that have gone to the development of a ride sharing program, improved traffic signaling, and a bicycle network, among other improvements. H.R. 7 also eliminates dedicated bicycle and pedestrian funding mechanisms, including Safe Routes to School, a program that allows local communities to make improvements that make walking to school a safer choice for children.

By reducing the District's connections to Philadelphia and the rest of the Northeast, H.R. 7 represents an attack on the 8th District's economic lifelines. We ask you to join us in opposing it.

Sincerely,

Joseph O. Minott, Esq.  
Executive Director