



Key Points

- *Transportation spending, both surface and mass transit, has a major impact on the economic development of local communities and on the quality of life for their residents.*
- *Congestion costs our country more than \$80 billion per year.*
- *The AIA's Moving Communities Forward study shows that well-designed transportation projects can benefit a community by facilitating economic development, creating jobs, increasing productivity, and easing traffic.*
- *The Surface Transportation Authorization Act, currently before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, would create as many as 6 million jobs.*
- *Congress should ensure that transportation funding and policies help strengthen communities.*

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Enact Comprehensive Transportation Reform Now

AIA Position

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) supports reforming the federal surface transportation program in order to invest adequate funds in our infrastructure; repair outdated and unsafe roads, bridges and facilities and infrastructure; reduce congestion and greenhouse gas emissions; promote livable, sustainable communities; and create jobs.

Action Sought

The AIA urges Congress to enact a five-year reauthorization of the federal surface transportation laws in 2009.

Explanation and Justification

Our current transportation system is broken. Crumbling infrastructure and rising congestion have hurt our nation's competitiveness, reduced safety and increased greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, outdated transportation laws have underfunded public transit and encouraged sprawl, creating less livable and walkable communities and forcing Americans into longer and longer commutes. Congress needs to enact transportation reform legislation *this year* in order to get our country moving again.

In January 2008, the AIA and the University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies released *Moving Communities Forward* (www.movingcommunitiesforward.org), a study authorized by Congress and funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation, that shows how well-designed transportation projects can bring multiple enhancements to communities in terms of economic development, health and the environment, visual identity and design, and public safety.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has released legislation, the Surface Transportation Authorization Act, which would make major strides in moving our country towards a 21st Century transportation system. Many of the bill's goals reflect the findings of *Moving Communities Forward*. Most importantly, this bill will create or save as many as six million jobs nationwide.

Delaying action on comprehensive transportation reform for 18 months or more will trap our communities in a failed system that threatens our economic and environmental well-being. Congress needs to act now to make sure that federal transportation policy truly helps us rebuild and renew our country.