September 24, 2019

The Honorable John Yarmuth
Chairman
Committee on the Budget
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Womack
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Yarmuth and Ranking Member Womack:

In anticipation of the Committee on the Budget hearing entitled “America’s Infrastructure: Today’s Gaps, Tomorrow’s Opportunities, and the Need for Federal Investment,” the Intelligent Transportation Society of America (ITS America) underscores that integrating technology into transportation infrastructure and services is critical to a strong U.S. economy as well as our global competitiveness in this century.

Over the years since the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was signed into law, automated and connected vehicle technologies have advanced, the collection and use of big data has become an increasingly valuable tool for decision makers, electrification of vehicles of every type from human scale to large-scale continues, and Mobility on Demand services are transforming how we get around. Advances in robotics, artificial intelligence, and wireless communications will define the way people, goods, services, and information move in the 21st century. Technology advancements will also help begin to reduce the epidemic of fatalities on our roadways.

For these reasons, ITS America supports federal policies and investments that bring our nation’s roads, bridges, transit, and rail infrastructure to a state of good repair and integrate technology to maximize safety and infrastructure and mobility efficiencies. Founded as an official advisory board on road technology to the U.S. Department of Transportation, ITS America represents state and city departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations, automotive manufacturers, technology companies, engineering firms, automotive suppliers, insurance companies, and research and academic universities. As the Committee on the Budget considers federal investments that can rebuild our nation’s infrastructure and support economic growth, ITS America recommends the following policies and investments:

- **Increase Investments in Research and Deployment of Intelligent Transportation Technologies:**
  Intelligent transportation technologies advance transportation safety and mobility, reduce congestion, improve air quality, and enhance American productivity by integrating advanced technologies into transportation infrastructure, operations, and vehicles. Only with investment certainty will the nation finally see and benefit from the research and the large-scale transformational deployments of intelligent transportation technologies. ITS America supports solvency of the Highway Trust Fund; the transition to a long-term and sustainable revenue source for transportation; and a national Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) pilot. We support increased funding for research, development, and demonstration of intelligent transportation systems technology; maintaining federal programs that allow state, metropolitan areas, and city congestion pricing strategies; and policy that increases funding for Intelligent Transportation Systems programs to streamline the movement of goods beginning at ports and through the multimodal supply chain including freight intelligent transportation systems and digital infrastructure systems.
• **Safeguard Critical Transportation Infrastructure from Cybersecurity Threats:** As vehicles and infrastructure become more connected, our nation’s transportation system faces increasing cybersecurity risks. Given the ability to cause loss of life and inflict significant economic damage in a highly visible manner, cybersecurity attacks directed at those producing or operating technologies travelling over or connected to U.S. roadways will intensify. ITS America supports policy that would provide states and localities funding and technical assistance under federal-aid highway programs and federal public transportation programs to safeguard critical transportation systems that are more reliant than ever on connectivity to communicate and exchange data from cybersecurity threats.

• **Prioritize the 5.9 GHz Spectrum for Vehicle-to-Everything Transportation Safety Communications:** The U.S. Department of Transportation is working with industry, safety, and public sector stakeholders to develop and evaluate cooperative technologies, equipment, and applications known as Connected Vehicle technologies that operate in the 5.9 GHz band collectively referred to as Vehicle-to-Everything (V2X) because it can be configured to enable real-time crash-avoidance alerts and warnings—offering a significant opportunity to achieve a transformation in transportation safety. ITS America supports Federal policy that makes clear the 5.9 GHz band is prioritized for existing, new, and developing V2X technologies that send hazard alerts to infrastructure, motorists, pedestrians, and other transportation system users and hold the promise to enhance automated driving systems. We support a policy that ensures all three phases of testing for the 5.9 GHz band are complete before the Federal Communications Commission rules on whether the spectrum can be shared with unlicensed devices like WiFi.

• **Expand Investments in Advanced Mobility Improvements:** ITS America supports expanding Federal investment and eligibility to include advanced mobility safety improvements including data infrastructure and analysis, smart mobility improvements such as smart truck parking, smart work zones, smart pavements, predictive analytics platform, and build out of electric vehicle charging stations, hydrogen fueling infrastructure, natural gas fueling infrastructure, and other alternative fuels.

• **Plan for Transformative Transportation Technologies:** States, providers of public transportation and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are expanding beyond traditional long-range scenario planning, which holds fixed certain transportation and land use assumptions, to consider big questions facing the transportation system including whether connected and automated vehicles will increase the vehicle capacity of existing highway lanes; how automation and active transportation connections might help solve the first mile/last mile transit challenge, what roadway investments could incentivize the shift to connected and automated vehicles, how to make sure the entire transportation system is working together, and how to expedite technology safety benefits. Increased Federal investments and flexibility will help planners analyze project performance across a range of different futures including ensuring all modes of transportation work in concert and will lead to more informed project prioritization that maximizes the benefits of connected and automated technologies.

• **Deploy Broadband to Support Intelligent Transportation Technologies:** Telecommunication technologies, such as broadband, are essential to the transport of people, data, and freight. ITS America supports Federal investments that assist states and localities with recovering costs associated with conduit installation, maintenance of conduit, and conduit inventory is critical to increasing broadband installation, especially in rural areas and economically disadvantaged urban
areas. Combining broadband conduit installation with highway and road construction will result in decreased frequency of construction on highways and roads, reduce broadband installation costs, increase access to and reliability of broadband networks, increase public and economic benefits, and decrease the time needed to deploy fiber.

- **Increase Buildout of Alternative Fuel Vehicle Infrastructure to Support a Future of Zero Emission Vehicles:** Alternative Fuel Vehicles are shaping the future of mobility, and the U.S. is poised to lead a global transition to zero emission vehicles (ZEV). Nevertheless, U.S. government analysis suggests that additional ZEV infrastructure investments will be required to satisfy the future of transportation. ITS America supports Federal investments to support state and local governments’ efforts with infrastructure providers to invest in electric vehicle charging and hydrogen fueling infrastructure along designated alternative fuel corridors. We also support the zero-emission plug-in electric vehicle tax credit, an additional allocation of zero-emission plug-in electric vehicle tax credits reserved for medium-duty commercial delivery vans, and the reinstatement of a zero-emission consumer tax credit for the purchase of fuel cell vehicles.

- **Build Transformative and Adaptive Infrastructure for Deployment of Intelligent Transportation Technologies to Mitigate Climate Change:** States, metropolitan regions, and cities will require substantial investment to adapt infrastructure to be resilient to a changing climate and to be responsive to a new mobility paradigm. ITS America supports Federal policies and investments that make transportation networks more resilient in the face of a changing climate and more responsive to the technology-fueled transformation in how people and goods move.

- **Establish a Mobility on Demand Program for the New World of Mobility:** In the 21st century, mobility is less about moving vehicles and more about moving people, data and freight. Long-existing silos among cities, states, counties, road and transit agencies are disappearing; and private mobility service providers barely existed a decade ago. ITS America supports Federal policies and investments that encourage flexibility within Federal transportation programs to meet changing mobility needs including partnerships with companies offering shared-use trips (car, bicycle, new mobility modes), data management, and other technology companies for first mile/last mile services, the integration of mobility services and technologies, and new fare technologies.

- **Strengthen the University Transportation Centers Program:** ITS America supports Federal policies and investments that support reforms in the University Transportation Centers program that direct grants to universities with research and technical expertise; encourage leading edge as well as near-term practical applied research (reduce the time period from research concept to completion); encourage broader inclusion of ITS-related curriculum, degrees, and professional development programs for current and future workforce; and increase opportunities for private sector funding contributions.

- **Repeal the Rescission of the $7.6 Billion in Federal-aid Highway Contract Authority:** ITS America applauds Congress’ focus on the need for Federal infrastructure investment. We urge Congress to act now to repeal the rescission of the $7.6 billion in Federal-aid highway contract authority scheduled to occur July 2020. Section 1438 of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act; P.L. 114-94) rescinds $7.6 billion in unobligated Federal-aid highway contract authority on July 1, 2020. All 50 states and the District of Columbia will be hurt
by the rescission. If allowed to take place, this provision will virtually eliminate all remaining contract authority in the core highway formula programs.

New forms of mobility are being deployed even as others are being developed. When cars were invented a century ago, Departments of Roads were created to build infrastructure for this new form of transportation. Those agencies are now Departments of Transportation, having grown to include many modes of transportation. Now those same agencies are evolving again to provide seamless multimodal mobility and to build smart infrastructure that will support the technology-driven 21st-century economy, which is all about moving, people, data, and freight.

ITS America supports federal policies and investments that recognize the added value of integrating technology into transportation infrastructure and services and provides funding for the rapid deployment of intelligent transportation technologies quickly and uniformly to transportation agencies and providers across the entire country.

Sincerely,

Shailen P. Bhatt
President and CEO
Intelligent Transportation Society of America

Cc: House Committee on the Budget
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