

**GREG STANTON**  
ARIZONA'S FOURTH DISTRICT

*VICE RANKING MEMBER*  
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AND INFRASTRUCTURE**  
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HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT SUBCOMMITTEE  
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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR CONGRESSMAN GREG STANTON, ARIZONA DISTRICT 4**

May 8, 2024

The Honorable Steve Womack  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing and Urban  
Development and Related Agencies 2358-A  
Rayburn House Office Building Washington,  
DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Quigley  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation, Housing and Urban  
Development and Related Agencies 2358-A  
Rayburn House Office Building Washington,  
DC 20515

Chairman Womack, Ranking Member Quigley, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on issues that are critically important to my state of Arizona.

Arizona, like many states across the country, benefits greatly from the federal influx of dollars into our local economy in transportation. The investment in railroads and light rail, airport infrastructure, and block grants to allow our cities and towns the ability to do large scale projects have reshaped what was formerly possible.

My office and I are in the process of vetting dozens of potential projects for Community Project Funding, and so many of them fall in the THUD space. Affordable housing, construction to keep our pedestrians safe and our traffic moving, and infrastructure to charge our vehicles are all on the docket. I look forward to working with the committee to invest in Arizona.

Thanks to \$158 million in federal funds flowing through the Federal Transit Agency (FTA), we officially opened the Northwest Extension Phase II in Arizona. Light Rail now extends from Mesa all the way to Metrocenter Mall, linking our downtown areas, job centers and campuses like Arizona State University in my district. This investment means that people in Arizona can travel for work, for recreation, and to local businesses to bolster the economy in their day to day lives.

We also received funds to create a scope and schedule for commuter rail between Phoenix and Tucson. This would be huge, connecting our communities, and making them more accessible and productive. It would boost regional economies with better access to jobs and more private investment along the route. It would also ease congestion along Interstate 10 and help reduce air

pollution. Capital Investment Grants (CIG) out of the FTA, and programs out of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are crucial to developing rail and bus we can all use. **As the committee considers its priorities for this fiscal cycle, please consider fully funding FTA and FRA related programs.**

Similarly, our bus system in Arizona has benefited from federal investment. Last year, Arizona received over \$13 million in federal funds to purchase zero-emission buses and necessary infrastructure. This transition not only lowers emissions, but it significantly lowers long-term fuel and maintenance costs for Valley Metro—saving taxpayer dollars and helping the flow of residents all over the Valley. **Please consider the highest possibly funding to the Bus and Bus Facility Competitive Grant program.**

Aviation is a key part of our economy. Arizona's aviation economy supports nearly 19,000 jobs and contributes billions to the state and country. We also have three of the top ten busiest aviation airports in the country, with Sky Harbor in Phoenix as one of the busiest. More than 48.8 million travelers passed through Sky Harbor last year, surpassing the previous record set in 2019 when nearly 46.3 million passengers were served. The year-end passenger total for Sky Harbor was 5.6% higher than 2019 and 10.1% higher than 2022.

That means we need to be up to date on our infrastructure. The airport infrastructure needs throughout the nation are projected at more than \$150 billion over the next 5 years, and \$2.6 billion in Arizona. The Airport Improvement Program is vital for the continuation of these efforts to reconstruct and rehabilitate our airports. **Please consider fully funding the AIP program in your FY25 bill.**

In Arizona, we have seven contract towers including Phoenix-Mesa Gateway, the busiest contract tower in the country in terms of air traffic. This important air traffic safety program maintains and develops general aviation activity and supports DOD flight training operations and military readiness and as well as pilot flight schools across the country. It's also important to note that contract towers account for approximately one third of all tower operations in the nation and about 70 percent of contract controllers are veterans.

We need funding to ensure our contract towers, and our air traffic control operations overall, are solvent and functioning safely. The Contract Tower Program provides funding for projects at many small town and municipal airports, including existing FAA air traffic control facilities, towers, and other facilities. The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 authorizes a pilot program to prioritize contract towers that had over 200,000 annual tower operations in calendar year 2022, served a small hub airport with more than 900,000 passenger enplanements in calendar year 2021, are currently FAA-owned or constructed to FAA standards, or operate within complex airspace. I urge the committee to consider a **funding level of \$30 million to establish this pilot program to convert high activity air traffic control towers operating under the Contract Tower Program to FAA staffed visual flight rules towers.**

Air traffic is more than planes – it is drones, too. My bipartisan bill, the Drone Infrastructure Inspection Grant (DIIG) Act, was incorporated into the FAA reauthorization bill. Funding the implementation of the DIIG Act would assist States, Tribes, and cities in using drones to inspect aging infrastructure, such as bridges, roads, dams, and the electric grid, more efficiently than

ever before--identifying and rectifying issues at the earliest possible stage, saving money and even lives. Benefits of drones for infrastructure inspections include improved worker safety, reduced carbon emissions and greater efficiencies and reduced costs. Drones can scan infrastructure, track changes over time, and are a smart, safe way to keep our infrastructure safe.

**I urge the committee to include language in the FY 25 appropriations bill and fund this program at the authorized level of \$12 million.**

Americans all around the country are facing an affordable housing crisis. In my state of Arizona, there is a shortage of 133,684 units of affordable and available units of rental housing for extremely low-income renters. In FY25, we must invest in federal efforts to ensure that Americans have access to safe and affordable housing. One of the areas that needs to most attention is our Native partners. Housing for Tribes and on Native lands has been chronically underfunded. I support the President's budget request **to provide \$1.3 billion to boost Tribal housing supply. I also ask the subcommittee support \$150 million for competitive funds targeted to Tribes with the greatest needs.**

In addition, we must focus on investing in programs that pay dividends. HUD's Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) provides formula grants to states and local communities to use to fund building, buying, and rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership. They also provide rental assistance in some cases. This is critical for community development, with an emphasis on consolidated planning to expand and strengthen partnerships among all levels of government and the private sector in the development of affordable housing. **I urge this subcommittee to provide \$1.3 billion for the HOME program.**

Last, all of the work we do in transportation is in close coordination with our local and state agencies and they need the flexibility to attack the unique issues in their communities. Discretionary grant programs like the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity, or RAISE program, and the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight & Highway Projects, or INFRA, program allow for high level funding to solve complex problems on the local and state level. This year, Arizona received a \$95 million INFRA grant to make major improvements and widen Interstate 10. This grant represents a unique partnership of governments, involving State, federal, tribal, and county governments in the planning and development of the grant to address the safety and infrastructure needs in Arizona and within the Gila River Indian Community, and efforts would not be possible without this large block funding. **I encourage robust funding to these programs in FY25.**

Thank you again for your attention to these issues.

Sincerely,



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Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress

