

Testimony of Carol D. Miller
House Committee on Oversight and Reform
“Member Day Hearing on Surface Transportation Policy Priorities”

Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the policy priorities that are important to my constituents in my home state of West Virginia and request their inclusion in this year’s infrastructure package.

We are at a watershed moment with our federal infrastructure. As Congress, we have an important role in ensuring that we can bridge the urban-rural divide through our infrastructure projects. Any highway infrastructure package put forward by Congress must provide flexibility to the states to produce the best results for their individual communities and populations. Especially in rural areas, our highway bill should allow for states to have the flexibility to best help their residents.

Essential to my community, and the Appalachian region as a whole, the Appalachian Development Highway System, known as the ADHS, is an essential part of bridging the urban-rural divide. The ADHS was created in 1965 and 90% of the roadways are now open to traffic. Since Fiscal Year 1999, construction of the highway system has slowed dramatically, leaving communities disconnected and forgotten. According to an analysis published by the Appalachian Regional Commission, completing the last remaining 300 miles of the highway system will enable the economy of 13 states to sell \$8.7 billion more in goods and services per year and add 46,000 jobs to the local economies. I strongly urge the committee to prioritize the completion of the ADHS as soon as possible.

Finally, it is critical for West Virginia, and our country, to look toward the future. I urge the committee to consider the inclusion and support of development of hyperloop projects. These projects are on the cutting edge of technology that could completely transform the ways in which we efficiently and effectively transport people and goods. In my home state of West Virginia, Virgin Hyperloop is currently working with state, local, and university partners to develop a hyperloop testing facility which will make this futuristic-sounding technology a present reality. This project will make West Virginia a leading innovator in the hyperloop conversation and bring jobs to our state. I encourage the Committee to consider competitive grant programs where hyperloop will have access to this investment, as well as codification of the Non-Traditional and Emerging Transportation Technology (NETT) Council at DOT to help accelerate consideration of hyperloop issues at DOT and make West Virginia a hub for this emerging technology.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present the policy priorities that are essential to my constituents in West Virginia, and Americans across the country.