

**Statement of Chairman Bill Shuster**  
**Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure**  
**Testimony before the Committee on House Administration**  
**Hearing on “Committee Funding for the 115th Congress”**  
**February 15, 2017**

Chairman Harper, Ranking Member Brady, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee on House Administration in support of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure’s budget request for the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. Our goal this Congress is to build upon the successes of the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress, and be responsible stewards of the public’s hard-earned tax dollars as we work to build a 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure for America.

In the 114th Congress, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee focused on strengthening our Nation’s infrastructure and improving federal programs through common-sense reforms that cut red tape, reduced regulatory burdens, increased transparency, and encouraged fiscal responsibility.

The Committee’s record in the 114th Congress included 56 public laws and concurrent resolutions, 104 bills approved by the House, 61 bills ordered reported or discharged by committee, 54 hearings, 12 markups, 12 committee field hearings and meetings outside the beltway, and 34 Government Accountability Office and Inspector General oversight reports and audits initiated.

Among the public laws passed last Congress were large, complex pieces of legislation to improve America’s infrastructure, including the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST), the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN), the Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act (PRRIA), the Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety Act (PIPES), and the Coast Guard Authorization Act. These bills all became law because we were able to build consensus and get things done for the American people in a bipartisan manner.

While this track record speaks to the hard work of our Members and staff, none of this could have been accomplished without the support of the Committee on House Administration. So, thank you.

Even with all these successes, there is still more work to be done. Indeed, we held a kickoff hearing at the beginning of this month entitled “Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Infrastructure for America”. At that hearing, prominent CEOs of several major manufacturers and job creators underscored some important facts about our infrastructure and our economy. America’s infrastructure is the backbone of our economy, and transportation infrastructure is what physically binds us together as a people and a Nation. A strong infrastructure means a strong America – an America that competes globally, supports local and regional economic development, and creates jobs.

However, our infrastructure will face significant challenges in the future. As our population grows from 319 million in 2014 to 400 million by 2051, so must the infrastructure that unites us. Therefore, with your help the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee is poised to meet those needs. But what does that mean?

For us, it means reimagining and building a 21st century infrastructure—leveraging resources from all levels of government and the private sector. It means improved roads and bridges that reduce bottlenecks that slow the flow of commerce. It means an aviation system with truly modern, efficient, and transformational air traffic control technology. It means ports and waterways that let our farmers and manufacturers move their crops and products to remain competitive with other nations. It means rail systems that focus on more effective, efficient service in regions of the country where rail transportation works well. It means pipelines that can transport the energy products that will power us into the future. It means infrastructure that is resilient when natural disaster strikes. It means infrastructure that can be built faster, unburdened by bureaucracy and impediments to private investment. It means infrastructure that encourages innovation and unleashes the next revolution in mobility.

We will take those steps this Congress, as the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee plans to move a number of important pieces of legislation to build a 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure for America, including:

- A reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration that will deliver real benefits to the flying public, enhance safety, reduce delays, improve the reliability of the system, streamline regulatory processes, and keep America at the forefront of aviation. The current authorization expires at the end of September 2017, and failure to reauthorize the FAA will lead to a shutdown of the agency and a lapse in its funding.
- A Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) that keeps Congress on the two-year cycle of addressing the needs of America’s harbors, locks, dams, flood protection, and other water resources infrastructure – a two-year cycle that we reestablished in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress.
- Legislation to authorize the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the federal programs that help reduce the loss of life and property and help communities and individuals recover from disasters.
- Legislation to reform the General Services Administration (GSA), and enable the agency to better facilitate consolidations, reduce space, negotiate the best possible office space lease deals, and sell unneeded property to save taxpayers billions of dollars.
- A bill to reauthorize the U.S. Coast Guard, support one of our Nation’s five armed services with the resources, vessels, and technology it needs, and strengthen the service to ensure it can successfully conduct its critical missions of maritime border protection, migrant and drug interdiction, search and rescue, and fisheries law enforcement.

- An infrastructure package, in accord with the Administration and other Congressional leaders, that will help reassert America's greatness by ensuring that our Nation has the transportation infrastructure to remain competitive in the crowded global marketplace of today and tomorrow.

In addition to these legislative goals, we must also ensure that we oversee the implementation of the accomplishments in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress. This includes educating a new Administration on the Congressional intent of those laws. The success of the reforms and improvements we envisioned and worked so hard on last Congress depend upon it.

We also must ensure that our Members, especially those new to the Committee and new to the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, understand the importance of what we have achieved in the last four years, and what we plan to do going forward. So, Member education, including the hands-on education afforded by travel and field visits, will continue to be a large part of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's focus. We continue to believe that the people's representatives must more frequently leave the confines of Washington, go to the people, and develop first-hand insights about the Nation's many needs and issues. Further, such travel provides better opportunities Members to understand the impacts and effects of our policies and choices.

The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will continue to ensure the American people's hard-earned tax dollars are put to good use by the agencies and budgets we oversee. On that note, Ranking Member DeFazio and I have developed a bipartisan budget that will help implement our legislative and oversight agenda, and continue to take our work to the people outside Washington, D.C., while maintaining a highly specialized staff that understands the intricacies of the policies and programs within our jurisdiction. In order to do so, we will need a modest increase to ensure we have the oversight and infrastructure specialists to achieve our objectives.

These are heady goals, and I believe with the Members and staff we have in place, and with your support, we can meet them. Thank you for the opportunity to present our Committee budget. I am happy to answer any and all questions you may have.