



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 23, 2026

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
United States House of Representatives
1135 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
United States House of Representatives
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Subject: **Support Requested: Proposal to Reinstate Local Surface Transportation Block Grant and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Regional Allocation Authority**

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen:

We write to respectfully request your support for a proposal to reinstate local suballocation authority for federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program funds in California's largest metropolitan region.

This proposal is widely supported by regional transit authorities, including:

- Riverside County Transportation Commission
- Orange County Transportation Authority
- Imperial County Transportation Commission
- San Bernardino County Transportation Authority
- Ventura County Transportation Commission

For over three decades, California successfully operated under a locally driven framework in which the State suballocated STBG and CMAQ funds to county transportation commissions, based on population. This approach empowered local agencies to plan and deliver transportation projects tailored to their communities while ensuring accountability and timely use of federal funds.

In 2021, a federal corrective action prohibited Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) from delegating project selection, effectively centralizing control at the regional level. In the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region, which is home to over 18.8 million people across six counties and nearly 200 cities, this shift has disrupted long-range planning, delayed project delivery, and diminished local responsiveness. Restoring the prior process will yield substantial efficiency gains by reducing administrative layers and directing more funding to project delivery, in a manner that ensures full obligation of federal funds.

We support a narrowly tailored amendment for inclusion in the next surface transportation reauthorization legislation. The amendment would restore direct formula allocation to county transportation agencies in metropolitan planning areas with populations exceeding 10 million. This change would enable county transportation commissions to continue managing and delivering projects efficiently, ensuring accountability and responsiveness to local needs while preserving MPO oversight of the broader transportation improvement program.

The following is the proposed legislative language:

Amend 23 U.S.C. §134(j) with:

(5) Formula distribution in large metropolitan areas.

In metropolitan planning areas with a total population exceeding 10,000,000, as determined by the most recent decennial census, the state department of transportation shall distribute funds provided under sections 133 and 149 to county transportation commissions created under state statute for project selection, based on the following:

- (A) The distribution process for funding under section 133 shall be based on population.
- (B) The distribution process for funding under section 149 shall be based on a formula that accounts for population and attainment status.
- (C) The metropolitan planning organization retains responsibility for the final approval of the transportation improvement program.

As language is developed for the surface transportation reauthorization bill, we appreciate your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,



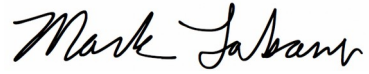
Ken Calvert
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Young Kim
Member of Congress



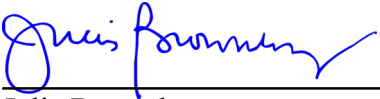
Mark Takano
Member of Congress



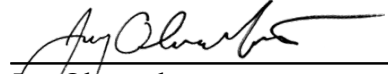
Dave Min
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Jay Obernolte
Member of Congress