



**COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION
ASSOCIATION OF IDAHO**

Administrative Office

913 W. River Street, Ste. 440
Boise, ID 83702
ph. 208.344.2354
fax 208.343.4543

District 1 Office

804 Airport Way, Ste. F
Sandpoint, ID 83864
ph. 208.610.4289
fax 208.263.4609

District 2 Office

CEDA

1626 6th Avenue North
Lewiston, ID 83501
ph. 208.746.0015
fax 208.746.0576

District 3 Office

913 W. River Street, Ste. 440
Boise, ID 83702
ph. 208.344.2354
fax 208.343.4543

District 4 Office

PO Box 2976
Hailey, ID 83333
ph. 208.720.8310
fax 208.343.4543

District 5 Office

210 East Center, Suite C
Pocatello, ID 83201
ph. 208.241.4379
fax 208.343.4543

District 6 Office

1075 S. Utah Ave., Ste. 176
Idaho Falls, ID 83402
ph. 208.559.4401
fax 208.344.4543

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July 13, 2011

Congressman Mike Simpson
United States Congress
2312 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Simpson:

On behalf of the members of Community Transportation Association of Idaho (CTAI), I want to personally commend you for your letter to Chairman Mica and Ranking Member Rahall urging them to fund surface transportation at a robust level, higher than or at least equal to the current funding level.

As the statewide association dedicated to improving transportation options in Idaho, we are very concerned with the six-year, multi-modal surface transportation authorization bill proposed by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee last week. While we commend the Chairman and the Committee for their efforts to expand project financing, streamline project delivery, and simplify federal grant programs we are deeply disappointed in the bill's investment level, which is miserably short of what is required to address the transportation infrastructure investment needs across the nation. As you are aware the proposal authorizes \$35B per year which is more than 30% less than the amount currently authorized under SAFETEA-LU.

As a state that relies heavily on federal transportation funding, the communities in Idaho will be deeply impacted by the proposed cut to our public transportation systems. This decrease of more than \$8 million will lead to severe reductions in transportation services for many individuals across the state and will equate to a loss of more than 300 jobs. With high gas prices, a slow economy, and increased ridership, now is not the time to implement cuts to the public transportation systems in Idaho.

I commend you for supporting a transportation bill that will put Americans back to work, provide businesses with relief from the costs of congestion and the insecurity of unreliable, inadequate infrastructure. And, I encourage you to urge the remaining Idaho Congressional Delegation to move forward with an authorization bill that increases transportation investment or at the very least, maintains current funding levels.

Respectfully,

Heather Wheeler
Executive Director



Improving Mobility in Idaho