

Policy Resolution PR-2-17

Title: Urging Congress to Maintain Consistent Support for Federal Transportation Investments by Ceasing Budgetary Reliance on Highway Contract Authority Rescissions

WHEREAS, In December 2015, Congress successfully passed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, the first long-term surface transportation authorization in a decade, which signaled its commitment to ensure predictable, stable federal funding between 2016 and 2020;

WHEREAS, despite the \$305 billion in highway, highway safety, transit, and passenger rail funding authorized by the FAST Act for five years, investment backlog for transportation infrastructure continues to increase, reaching \$836 billion for highways and bridges and \$122 billion for transit according to the *2015 Conditions and Performance Report* by the US Department of Transportation, and the American Society of Civil Engineers has identified a \$1.1 trillion funding gap for surface transportation between 2016 and 2025; and;

WHEREAS, at the same time, the House Appropriations for Transportation-Housing and Urban Development for fiscal year 2018 contains an \$800 million rescission of unobligated highway contract authority carried only by the state departments of transportation, and the Senate appropriations does not include a comparable provision; and

WHEREAS, rescinding unobligated highway contract authority is a budgetary artifice that at best impedes the flexibility of state departments of transportation to meet their individual infrastructure needs, and disrupts transportation planning and timely delivery of projects; and

WHEREAS, at worst, cumulative rescissions may result in hard funding cuts when combined with the \$856 million rescission enacted in June 2017 based on fiscal year 2017 appropriations and the \$7.6 billion rescission scheduled for July 2020 under the FAST Act; and therefore now be it

RESOLVED, Congress is urged to repeal the \$800 million rescission as currently contained in the House Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2018; and be it further

RESOLVED, Congress is urged to repeal the \$7.6 billion rescission scheduled for July 2020 under the FAST Act; and be it further

RESOLVED, if an acceptable budgetary resource or "pay-fors" to prevent these rescissions cannot be found and Congress retains the currently proposed rescissions, it is urged to provide maximum flexibility to state departments of transportation by allowing rescinded contract authority to be derived from every federal highway and transit program category, and by removing onerous requirements that require proportional rescissions across affected program categories; and be it further

RESOLVED, in the future, authorizing and appropriations committees in Congress are urged to consistently support federal investment in transportation by ceasing its reliance on highway contract authority rescissions as an off-set for unrelated programs.