

### Safe and Efficient Transportation

As a former Member of the House Transportation Committee, and as a current Senior Member of the House Appropriations and Budget Committees, I have successfully fought for Santa Clara County's fair share of federal transportation funding to improve the inter-city and intra-city travel for our fast growing region. More broadly, I have been at the forefront of Congressional efforts to craft policies that encourage sound planning for our nation's airports, highways, and public transportation systems.

- [Aviation](#)
- [Rail](#)
- [Surface Transportation](#)

### Surface Transportation

I have lived in Silicon Valley for most of my life, and like many lifelong residents, I have seen our area grow immensely in recent years. Due to this growth, our commutes have become more difficult and more time consuming—taking time away from our daily lives that is much better spent with family and friends. Gridlock threatens to undermine the quality of life and economic growth our region has worked so hard to achieve.

### SAFETEA-LU

To reduce congestion and improve safety, I have tirelessly advocated for locally-identified transportation priorities, including a BART extension to San Jose and important highway and trail projects. In July 2005, Congress finalized legislation reauthorizing federal surface transportation programs. Referred to as SAFETEA-LU, the bill provided \$286.4 billion in guaranteed spending for highways, highway safety and transit through fiscal year 2009. This level of funding was a significant increase over previously authorized levels, but falls far short of

\$375 billion the U.S. Department of Transportation has concluded is necessary to maintain and improve existing infrastructure.

Congress is nearing completion of work to reauthorize SAFETEA-LU. Unfortunately, for the first time in more than 50 years, House Republicans have assembled a purely partisan transportation package – breaking the historical tradition of bipartisan action to rebuild our infrastructure, create jobs, and strengthen our economy. The Republican proposal, H.R. 7, eliminates 550,000 American jobs, cuts highway investments in 45 states and D.C., and bankrupts the Highway Trust Fund with a \$78 billion shortfall over 10 years, jeopardizing critical transportation projects and jobs. In addition, H.R. 7 undermines transportation safety by cutting National Highway Traffic Safety Administration grants, allowing companies with poor safety records to be exempted from hazardous material safety requirements, and delaying the deadline for installing new systems to automatically prevent collisions and derailments for passenger rail until 2020.

Incredibly, H.R. 7 includes sweeping changes that undermine local community involvement and environmental protection in transportation project development, such as delegating environmental and safety reviews – including whether they should be conducted -- entirely to state highway agencies, imposing arbitrary deadlines for completing or challenging reviews regardless of project size, and waiving environmental reviews for all projects where the federal share of the costs is less than \$10 million or 15 percent of the total project cost regardless of the scope of the project.

I am encouraged that the Senate, under Democratic leadership, has passed a bipartisan reauthorization bill. I hope that my Republican colleagues in the House will abandon their extreme, partisan legislation and join the Democrats in passing a responsible reauthorization bill.

### **BART Extension to San Jose**

The BART Silicon Valley Project is one of the most critical transportation improvements currently under way in the Bay Area. When realized, it will enhance regional commuter

connectivity; alleviate traffic congestion; accommodate future travel demand; improve access to employment, education, medical, and retail centers; and maximize public transit usage among numerous high technology businesses and other employment centers in Silicon Valley. The alignment for this project generally will parallel I-680 and I-880, which are among the most congested corridors in the nine-county Bay Area region. The project represents the last link needed to complete the connection of all of our region's rail systems around San Francisco Bay. The project also promises to be an economic success: it is expected that for every dollar spent on construction, operations and maintenance of the BART project, \$4 to \$10 will be reinvested in the local economy.

Over the past three years, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority has worked extensively with the Federal Transit Administration to make the BART project more competitive for federal funding. A critical component of the process was the voter support of Measure B in November of 2008. The operations revenue that will result from our county's commitment to improved, expanded public transportation has significantly strengthened the project.

As a former Member of the House Transportation Committee, and a current senior Member of the House Appropriations Committee, securing approval and funding for the BART project has been one of my top priorities. With the support of my constituents, I promised that I would not give up on this project and would fight to ensure that it receives the federal funds that it deserves. I was so proud of our communities' efforts that, in October 2010, I invited U.S. Department of Transportation Under Secretary Roy Kienitz to see the project first hand and report his findings back to Secretary Ray LaHood and President Obama. The visit, which included a briefing with local business, transportation, and government leaders at the Mineta Transportation Institute, was a success, and was key in the President recommending the project for a funding agreement last year.

I worked with Secretary LaHood to ensure that he gave full and fair consideration of the importance of keeping this project on schedule, which required his Department to send the BART project's approved-FFGA to Capitol Hill by the second week of 2012, and I am pleased that the Transportation Secretary was able to deliver on that timetable.

On March 12, 2012, I joined local and federal officials in San Jose at the signing of the \$900 million federal Full Funding Grant Agreement, which included the appropriation of the first \$100 million. With these funds, the project is expected to create 2,500 annual construction jobs and 7,400 annual permanent jobs once operational. Ultimately, the BART Silicon Valley Project means a stronger job-creating environment, which is why so many of our communities' business and government leaders have supported it. The recent \$900 million federal grant agreement

represents the fortitude of our Silicon Valley communities and is a big win for our region.

### Highway Safety

Traffic crashes are to blame for approximately 42,000 fatalities and 2.9 million injuries each year in the U.S. Vehicle crashes, in fact, are the leading cause of death in our nation for people ages 3 to 33. These sobering statistics demonstrate clearly that transportation officials and law enforcement authorities are battling a serious public health crisis brought on by unsafe infrastructure and reckless, distracted and fatigued drivers. These traffic incidents result in significant economic costs totaling more than \$230 billion annually.

Prior to my election to Congress, I was a board member with one of country's most effective highway safety organizations: [Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways \(CRASH\)](#). In 1998, I authored [Kim's Law](#), urging the California Department of Transportation to adopt regulations for maximum truck lengths on highways identified as unsuitable for long trucks. The bill was named for Californian Kim Mosqueda, who along with her unborn baby was crushed to death by a 65-foot truck offtracking around a sharp curve on a scenic mountain road on Thanksgiving Day in 1991.

In Congress, I have continued my efforts to make America's highways safer for everyone. I have continuously opposed efforts to extend workdays for truckers from 14 to 16 hours—almost double the workday of an average American. In 2005, I offered an amendment to surface transportation authorization legislation to encourage the creation of DWI courts. DWI courts seek to reduce these numbers by targeting repeat offenders, who have demonstrated that the traditional court system is not an adequate deterrent. Repeat offenders prove that punishment without treatment and rigorous accountability is not an effective strategy to protect the public from drunk drivers. My amendment, which passed by voice vote, encouraged their creation by making clear their eligibility for Section 203 funds. As a member of the House Committee on Appropriations, I have continued to monitor the funding of DWI courts.

### Aviation

I have lived in Silicon Valley for most of my life, and like many lifelong residents, I have seen our area grow immensely in recent years. Due to this growth, our commutes have become more difficult and more time consuming—taking time away from our daily lives that is much better spent with family and friends. Gridlock threatens to undermine the quality of life and economic growth our region has worked so hard to achieve.

### SAFETEA-LU

To reduce congestion and improve safety, I have tirelessly advocated for locally-identified transportation priorities, including a BART extension to San Jose and important highway and trail projects. In July 2005, Congress finalized legislation reauthorizing federal surface transportation programs. Referred to as SAFETEA-LU, the bill provided \$286.4 billion in guaranteed spending for highways, highway safety and transit through fiscal year 2009. This level of funding was a significant increase over previously authorized levels, but falls far short of \$375 billion the U.S. Department of Transportation has concluded is necessary to maintain and improve existing infrastructure.

Congress is nearing completion of work to reauthorize SAFETEA-LU. Unfortunately, for the first time in more than 50 years, House Republicans have assembled a purely partisan transportation package – breaking the historical tradition of bipartisan action to rebuild our infrastructure, create jobs, and strengthen our economy. The Republican proposal, H.R. 7, eliminates 550,000 American jobs, cuts highway investments in 45 states and D.C., and bankrupts the Highway Trust Fund with a \$78 billion shortfall over 10 years, jeopardizing critical transportation projects and jobs. In addition, H.R. 7 undermines transportation safety by cutting National Highway Traffic Safety Administration grants, allowing companies with poor safety records to be exempted from hazardous material safety requirements, and delaying the deadline for installing new systems to automatically prevent collisions and derailments for passenger rail until 2020.

Incredibly, H.R. 7 includes sweeping changes that undermine local community involvement and environmental protection in transportation project development, such as delegating environmental and safety reviews – including whether they should be conducted -- entirely to

state highway agencies, imposing arbitrary deadlines for completing or challenging reviews regardless of project size, and waiving environmental reviews for all projects where the federal share of the costs is less than \$10 million or 15 percent of the total project cost regardless of the scope of the project.

I am encouraged that the Senate, under Democratic leadership, has passed a bipartisan reauthorization bill. I hope that my Republican colleagues in the House will abandon their extreme, partisan legislation and join the Democrats in passing a responsible reauthorization bill.

### **BART Extension to San Jose**

The BART Silicon Valley Project is one of the most critical transportation improvements currently under way in the Bay Area. When realized, it will enhance regional commuter connectivity; alleviate traffic congestion; accommodate future travel demand; improve access to employment, education, medical, and retail centers; and maximize public transit usage among numerous high technology businesses and other employment centers in Silicon Valley. The alignment for this project generally will parallel I-680 and I-880, which are among the most congested corridors in the nine-county Bay Area region. The project represents the last link needed to complete the connection of all of our region's rail systems around San Francisco Bay. The project also promises to be an economic success: it is expected that for every dollar spent on construction, operations and maintenance of the BART project, \$4 to \$10 will be reinvested in the local economy.

Over the past three years, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority has worked extensively with the Federal Transit Administration to make the BART project more competitive for federal funding. A critical component of the process was the voter support of Measure B in November of 2008. The operations revenue that will result from our county's commitment to improved, expanded public transportation has significantly strengthened the project.

As a former Member of the House Transportation Committee, and a current senior Member of the House Appropriations Committee, securing approval and funding for the BART project has

been one of my top priorities. With the support of my constituents, I promised that I would not give up on this project and would fight to ensure that it receives the federal funds that it deserves. I was so proud of our communities' efforts that, in October 2010, I invited U.S. Department of Transportation Under Secretary Roy Kienitz to see the project first hand and report his findings back to Secretary Ray LaHood and President Obama. The visit, which included a briefing with local business, transportation, and government leaders at the Mineta Transportation Institute, was a success, and was key in the President recommending the project for a funding agreement last year.

I worked with Secretary LaHood to ensure that he gave full and fair consideration of the importance of keeping this project on schedule, which required his Department to send the BART project's approved-FFGA to Capitol Hill by the second week of 2012, and I am pleased that the Transportation Secretary was able to deliver on that timetable.

On March 12, 2012, I joined local and federal officials in San Jose at the signing of the \$900 million federal Full Funding Grant Agreement, which included the appropriation of the first \$100 million. With these funds, the project is expected to create 2,500 annual construction jobs and 7,400 annual permanent jobs once operational. Ultimately, the BART Silicon Valley Project means a stronger job-creating environment, which is why so many of our communities' business and government leaders have supported it. The recent \$900 million federal grant agreement represents the fortitude of our Silicon Valley communities and is a big win for our region.

## Highway Safety

Traffic crashes are to blame for approximately 42,000 fatalities and 2.9 million injuries each year in the U.S. Vehicle crashes, in fact, are the leading cause of death in our nation for people ages 3 to 33. These sobering statistics demonstrate clearly that transportation officials and law enforcement authorities are battling a serious public health crisis brought on by unsafe infrastructure and reckless, distracted and fatigued drivers. These traffic incidents result in significant economic costs totaling more than \$230 billion annually.

Prior to my election to Congress, I was a board member with one of country's most effective

highway safety organizations: [Citizens for Reliable and Safe Highways \(CRASH\)](#) . In 1998, I authored [Kim's Law](#) , urging the California Department of Transportation to adopt regulations for maximum truck lengths on highways identified as unsuitable for long trucks, The bill was named for Californian Kim Mosqueda, who along with her unborn baby was crushed to death by a 65-foot truck offtracking around a sharp curve on a scenic mountain road on Thanksgiving Day in 1991.

In Congress, I have continued my efforts to make America's highways safer for everyone. I have continuously opposed efforts to extend workdays for truckers from 14 to 16 hours—almost double the workday of an average American. In 2005, I offered an amendment to surface transportation authorization legislation to encourage the creation of DWI courts. DWI courts seek to reduce these numbers by targeting repeat offenders, who have demonstrated that the traditional court system is not an adequate deterrent. Repeat offenders prove that punishment without treatment and rigorous accountability is not an effective strategy to protect the public from drunk drivers. My amendment, which passed by voice vote, encouraged their creation by making clear their eligibility for Section 203 funds. As a member of the House Committee on Appropriations, I have continued to monitor the funding of DWI courts.

## Rail

### California High Speed Rail

The proposed [California High Speed Rail](#) system stretches from San Francisco, Oakland and Sacramento in the north to Los Angeles and San Diego in the south. Operating at speeds up to 220 mph, the express travel time from downtown San Francisco to Los Angeles will be just under 2 ½ hours. The service will be an exciting and attractive option for intercity travel and will reduce congestion at California airports.

Caltrans' High Speed Rail Commission has selected a southern route for the HSR train's entrance into the Bay Area. A map of the proposed route can be found at <http://www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/>. After years of working with my fellow Santa Clara County legislators, supporting the southern route as the only sensible selection, I am pleased by the decision of the HSR commission. The proposed route is not only sounder from an engineering and environmental perspective but will significantly benefit Santa Clara County by stopping in a number of towns in our area.

In 2009, Congress appropriated \$8 billion for HSR projects in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and President Obama's administration recognized the achievements of California by awarding \$2.2 billion of that funding to the California HSR project. More information about High Speed Rail projects around the nation, including California's, can be [found here](#).

President Obama's FY2013 budget request calls for a \$2.7 billion investment in high-speed rail. I applaud the President's vision for a sustainable, competitive future.

### **Amtrak**

Even though I am no longer a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I strongly support Amtrak and the critical role intercity passenger rail service plays in our national transportation network. As we have seen in California, Amtrak service reduces traffic congestion, as well as automobile emissions. The State of California also understands the value of Amtrak. California has the largest State-supported intercity passenger rail program today. In Fiscal year 2010, Over 5.1 million passengers traveled on the three routes that Amtrak operates for California, which represented 18% of Amtrak's total ridership.

Amtrak was created in 1970 to preserve intercity passenger rail service after freight railroad companies successfully lobbied the federal government to relieve them of their common carrier responsibilities. Since its formation, Amtrak has been plagued by financial woes. The strong partnership between Amtrak and California should serve as a model for other states, and I will

press this point with my colleagues as the Congress moves to reform Amtrak. But even greater state involvement in Amtrak operations cannot completely address Amtrak's long-term financial issues. The Amtrak Reform Council and the DOT Inspector General's Office have both estimated that Amtrak, as currently structured, requires around half a billion dollars in operating support and around a billion dollars in capital spending annually, a considerably higher level of funding than Amtrak has ever consistently received.

While I am open to considering structural reforms at Amtrak, I will not betray my support for Amtrak and the important role it plays in our nation's transportation network. I will continue to be an advocate for Amtrak and for greater federal investment in rail infrastructure. As congestion worsens on our highways and in our airways, I am committed to preserving and improving all critical modes of transportation, including rail.

The House of Representatives and President Obama recognized the importance of continued investment in the development of Amtrak by including \$1.3 billion in funding in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

### RELATED SECTIONS

{loadposition related}