

June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

The Honorable John Barrasso  
Chairman of the Senate Committee on  
Environment and Public Works  
307 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thomas Carper  
Ranking Member on the Senate Committee on  
Environment and Public Works  
513 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Barrasso and Ranking Member Carper,

On behalf of the over 400-member companies of the National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (NSSGA), I welcome today's hearing, titled "*Infrastructure: The Road to Recovery.*" As your committee understands well, a robust, multi-year surface transportation reauthorization is the most effective legislative tool to combat the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and put hundreds of thousands of Americans back to work. This hearing will underscore that need and highlight the immediacy by which we need to act.

NSSGA is the leading advocate and resource for the aggregates industry, who provide the critical raw materials found in virtually every surface transportation project; roads, highways, bridges, runways, pipelines and much more. Our membership represents more than 90 percent of the crushed stone and 70 percent of the sand and gravel produced annually in the United States. As your committee continues to advance bills that support our Nation's infrastructure, like *America's Transportation and Infrastructure Act (ATIA)* and *America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2020 (AWIA)*, NSSGA recognizes the urgency that Congress must pass these critical infrastructure reauthorization bills and gives all our support. As we face unemployment numbers rivaling the Great Depression and sit idle as countless public works fall into disrepair, infrastructure investment is the fastest and most enduring way to create jobs and realize a real economic recovery. The time to act is now.

Echoing the hearing's title, NSSGA loudly supports a surface transportation reauthorization bill that will address the more than \$800 billion backlog of vital public works projects, which must be addressed to provide the motoring public safe and efficient roads, bridges and highways<sup>1</sup>. Without question, this backlog of vital projects emphasizes the chronic pattern of underinvestment for years. The current FAST Act expires on September 30 – less than four months from now – and if Congress cannot pass an appropriate reauthorization bill, it will create frustratingly long project delays; increased costs on taxpayers; and exacerbate an already underfunded and overutilized surface transportation infrastructure network.

This need is even more critical when you consider that state Department of Transportation agencies (DOTs) have had to absorb upwards of 30 to 45 percent in revenue declines due to "shelter in place" orders to limit the pandemic's spread and deter normal driving and daily commuting in almost every state in the union. We support an immediate infusion of funds to support these state DOTs, as many are now suspending or canceling their lettings for this summer at the height of the construction season,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.infrastructurereportcard.org/cat-item/roads/>

impacting various public works projects that were previously budgeted to begin or continue prior to the pandemic's spread. Ignoring the call to support state DOTs will blunt any infrastructure recovery package or highway reauthorization bill, no matter its size and scope, and will set back our country's infrastructure needs significantly. We hope the committee understands and advances this need so that bills like ATIA and AWIA can be leveraged and maximized to their full potential.

America's economy has come to a dramatic stop and unemployment figures have risen to historic highs because of the pandemic, and if we hope to recover quickly, we must support the countless public works projects that benefit local and regional communities. Infrastructure investment is the necessary tool to lead America's economic recovery, and NSSGA is here to advance that message throughout Capitol Hill. We urge Congress to come together and pass meaningful and impactful infrastructure investment.

I appreciate your committee's leadership, advancing sound infrastructure policies, and thank you for your consideration. As you continue to examine and advance a meaningful highway reauthorization bill and other matters relevant to the aggregates industry, please consider NSSGA as a resource. Thank you again for your time and interest on this critical issue.

Sincerely,



Michael W. Johnson  
President and CEO  
National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works