



Honorable Tim Johnson
Chairman
Committee on Banking, Housing, &
Urban Affairs
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Mike Crapo
Ranking Member
Committee on Banking, Housing, &
Urban Affairs
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Johnson and Ranking Member Crapo:

We, members of the National Parks Second Century Action Coalition, write to urge you to re-institute the Transit in Park (TRIP) program as part of the upcoming reauthorization of federal transit programs.

The National Parks Second Century Action Coalition is made up of organizations in the conservation, recreation, travel and tourism, historic preservation, and economic development communities dedicated to promoting the protection, restoration, and operation of the National Park System to benefit the health and well-being of current and future generations.

The TRIP program was established under SAFETEA-LU in 2005 in recognition that transportation access to and around our national parks and other federal lands cannot be effectively provided to visitors by highways alone. With nearly 300 million people visiting national parks a year, alternative transportation systems (ATS) can play an important role in relieving congestion, improving environmental quality, boosting local tourism economies, and enhancing visitor experience in our parks and public lands.

ATS encompass motorized land- and water-based transportation systems, including alternative fuel buses (running on fuels like propane, electricity, and natural gas), trolleys, water taxis, ferry boats, canal boats, and aerial tramways, as well as non-motorized modes of transportation such as biking and walking. Moreover, ATS provide traffic advisory using ITS technology.

Approximately \$162 million has been awarded under the TRIP program since its establishment. The authority for the TRIP program was repealed in 2012 with the enactment of MAP-21, however. The National Park Service alone has suffered a loss of support under the program estimated at \$18 million per year for transit, trails, and ITS.

When Congress eliminated the TRIP program in 2012, it was thought that the restructured Park Roads and Parkways Program, renamed as the Federal Lands Transportation Program (FLTP), would pick up the slack and cover the gap. That

assumption did not turn out to be correct, as the FLTP is geared principally toward road and bridge improvements.

It is now clear that a program like TRIP that specifically supports ATS is indispensable to providing comprehensive, reliable, and efficient transportation services in our national parks and federal lands. With 300 million visitors to our national parks that contribute an estimated \$14 billion in nearby communities every year, the benefits of the program far outweigh the costs. We, therefore, ask that the Banking Committee include the re-institution of the TRIP program in its legislation to reauthorize federal transit programs.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Biking & Walking
American Forests
American Hiking Society
American Recreation Council
The American Society of Landscape
Architects
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Association of Partners for Public Lands
Bicycle Coalition of Maine
Bicycle Coalition of New Mexico
Bike Texas
Bike Utah
BikeWalkLee
Bike Walk Tennessee
Coalition of National Park Service
Retirees
Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley
National Park
Destination Marketing Association
International
The Corps Network
Friends of Acadia
Friends of Big Bend
Friends of Hawai'i Volcanoes National
Friends of Saguaro National Park

Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes
Friends of the Smokies
Georgia Bikes
Great Rivers Greenway
Japanese American Citizens League
The League of American Bicyclists
Mesa Verde Foundation
Mississippi River Fund
National Complete Streets Coalition
National Hispanic Environmental
Council
National Parks Conservation Association
National Park Hospitality Association
National Recreation and Park
Association
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Outdoor Industry Association
Public Lands Service Coalition
Southeast Tourism Society
Timucuan Trail Parks Foundation
Trust for America's Health
Washington Bikes
Western National Parks Association
Wyoming Pathways
Yosemite Conservancy