



August 28, 2007

The Honorable Mary E. Peters
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: Your Comments on Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Funding

Dear Secretary Peters:

I am writing with regards to statements that you made on the August 15 MacNeil Lehrer Newshour, and in your interview with Morton Kondracke. While we are all saddened by the collapse of the Minneapolis Bridge and the lives that were lost in the process, the Safe Routes to School National Partnership feels that it was inappropriate for you to directly or indirectly blame the collapse of the bridge on the funding of bicycle trails, paths, and walk to school programs. It is also inaccurate to state that bicycle trails and paths are not transportation.

As you know, through the \$286.5 billion federal transportation bill, SAFETEA-LU, only about 1% of federal funding is being used to support bicycle and pedestrian transportation projects. According to the 2001 National Household Travel Survey, approximately 9.5% of trips are made by walking and bicycling, and according to data from NHTSA, 13% of fatalities on roadways in the United States are bicycles and pedestrians. An analysis of these numbers shows that the amount of funding spent on walking and bicycling in the United States is negligible compared to the number of trips being made, and the high rate of fatalities for these modes.

The \$612 million Safe Routes to School program that was funded as part of SAFETEA-LU holds real promise to get more children walking and bicycling safely, and to change the habits of an entire generation. All 50 states and the District of Columbia are engaged in their Safe Routes to School programs, see the state pages on our website, www.saferoutespartnership.org for details.

The SRTSNP respectfully requests that you retract the negative statements that you made recently regarding federal funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects. In addition to the fact that bicycling and walking represent a very small amount of the federal transportation investment, it's noteworthy that many states have not been spending all of their federal funding allocations for bridges, and several states turned back bridge funds in the 2006 rescission.

We also hope that the U.S. D.O.T will support Safe Routes to School and bicycle and pedestrian projects in the reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU. Walking and bicycling are not only "real transportation" modes, for many people they are their only means of transportation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Deb Hubsmith".

Deb Hubsmith, Director
Safe Routes to School National Partnership