November 11, 2016

The Honorable Hal Rogers  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-305 Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey:

The Highway Materials Group (HMG), comprised of ten national associations representing the people and companies that provide the construction materials and equipment essential to building America’s transportation infrastructure, reiterates our gratitude to Congress for the bipartisan passage of the FAST Act last year. However, we have serious concerns with language in the Senate’s FY 2017 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations (THUD) bill to reclaim critical federal transportation dollars through a $2.2 billion rescission of unobligated Highway Trust Fund contract authority. We urge Congress reject this rescission in any final FY 2017 THUD package.

The FAST Act provides modest increases to our nation’s transportation programs and it is imperative that any final FY 2017 transportation appropriation measure at a minimum provides the highway and public transportation investment levels authorized in the FAST Act. By reducing the ability of state departments of transportation (DOTs) to use federal funds in a manner that meets their unique circumstances, the proposed rescission undercuts the FAST Act’s objective to increase state flexibility.

Project lists for 2017 have already been drawn up by state DOTs, most States are on budget years that start in July and many state legislatures have wrapped up their year-ahead budgets. As a result, most States do not have adequate time to deal with any sudden cuts to federal funding. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the proposed rescission could “force states to cut actual highway expenditures at a time when we need to be investing in our nation’s infrastructure.” The proposed $2.2 billion rescission coupled with the $7.6 billion rescission in 2020 in the FAST Act means that a total of nearly $10 billion will be rescinded from HTF programs used by state DOTs.

Timely enactment of a FY 2017 THUD package that fulfills the commitments made in the FAST Act by appropriating the entire authorized surface transportation investment levels for FY 2017 would help ensure continued progress to improve the nation’s transportation network.

Sincerely,

Highway Materials Group