



April 14, 2021

The Honorable Tom Carper
Chairman
Senate Committee on Environment
and Public Works

The Honorable Shelly Moore-Capito
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Environment
and Public Works

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Chairwoman
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science
and Transportation

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
House Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
House Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Chairman
House Committee on Energy
and Commerce

The Honorable Cathy McMorris-Rogers
Ranking Member
House Committee on Energy
and Commerce

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

The COVID-19 pandemic deeply exposed the vulnerability and fragility of U.S. supply chains, and the infrastructure that supports them. Infrastructure legislation will require a commitment to bipartisan collaboration and outside-the-box thinking, driven by the experience and expertise of stakeholders like the consumer packaged goods (CPG) industry.

Accounting for one-fifth of all freight in the United States, the CPG industry possesses unique insight into infrastructure and transportation concerns across the country, with supply chains that stretch across thousands of manufacturing centers, shipping lanes and retail locations, not to mention connectivity to American consumers.

To that end, the Consumer Brands Association submits the following policy recommendations to enhance supply chain competitiveness and resiliency. These steps will ensure the availability, affordability and accessibility of everyday products for decades to come.

Create an Office of Supply Chain Within the Executive Branch: The most impactful approach to restoring resiliency in American supply chains would be the creation of an Office of Supply Chain within the executive branch, as outlined in H.R. 1024, to encourage inter-governmental collaboration and strategic decision-making on policies that impact national competitiveness — like transportation and infrastructure investment. This is substantially similar to President Biden’s recommended new office at the Department of Commerce as part of the

Consumer Brands Association
1001 19th Street North, 7th Floor
Arlington, VA 22209

Powering every day.



American Jobs Plan.

Prioritize and Assess Investments Based on Performance Impact: Congress should focus efforts on key performance indicators (e.g., reduced congestion), instead of restricting investments based on traditional transportation modes, project types, programs or formulas. To streamline and simplify construction while preserving safeguards, Congress should require an audit of project reviews and permitting processes nationally. In turn, federal and state DOTs should measure how investments translate to on-the-ground success after project completion, assessing impact to calibrate future spending and program design.

Accelerate Technology to Achieve Environmental Aspirations: The transportation sector lags others on reducing carbon emissions and environmental impact. Alternative fuel vehicle infrastructure and vehicle incentives should be expanded, especially for commercial vehicles due to the outsized environmental opportunity and annual miles traveled. Now is also the time to develop the necessary frameworks to accelerate autonomous vehicles, especially for commercial use where the environmental and safety gains could exceed those for passenger vehicles.

Leverage the Full Capacity of Modernized Commercial Vehicles: Incorporate a data collection pilot program authorizing the use of modernized and safe commercial vehicles. Congress should include a program that would permit a limited number of states to allow operation of vehicles weighing up to 91,000 pounds gross vehicle weight (GVW) with six axles on Interstate System Highways.

Promote New Truck Drivers and Essential Supply Chain Personnel: The current truck driver shortage contributes to rising consumer good prices and is expected to worsen. Congress should enact the DRIVE Safe Act, which reduces barriers to entry for truck drivers and encourages additional drivers to enter the market. Government should be sensitive to policies that would unnecessarily constrict already tight supply and heighten market volatility.

Account for E-Commerce and Urban Delivery: Rising urban congestion and delivery was rightly identified in the recently issued National Strategic Freight Plan as a pressing concern, not least because the last mile is the most costly. Congress should fund research around urban freight facilitation and empower city DOT leaders to tackle management and congestion concerns.

As you consider what steps to take on transportation and infrastructure over the coming months, we encourage you to consider the above recommendations and the Consumer Brands Association as a policy resource.

Sincerely,

Tom Madrecki
Vice President, Supply Chain
Consumer Brands Association

Consumer Brands Association
1001 19th Street North, 7th Floor
Arlington, VA 22209

Powering every day.