

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 14, 2009

The Honorable James L. Oberstar  
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John L. Mica  
Ranking Member, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
2163 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica:

We are writing to express our strong support for a \$194 million request of federal funds for the National Gateway Initiative and specifically request that the Committee provide funding through the Projects of National and Regional Significance (PNRS) Program in the upcoming surface transportation authorization legislation. This project seeks to provide a more efficient way to link Mid-Atlantic ports with Midwestern markets, by improving the flow of rail traffic between these regions with double-stack trains. By investing in a more efficient freight rail network for our country, the National Gateway can, in a very meaningful way, help address serious concerns about the economy, U.S. competitiveness, congestion, highway safety and maintenance, global warming, clean air and energy efficiency.

The National Gateway has the support of the six Governors along the corridor, in addition to dozens of government, community and business leaders and CSX Transportation. With improved clearances, new intermodal terminals and greater capacity, this state-of-the-art rail corridor will bolster environmental health and promote economic growth by improving the flow of freight via rail through the increased use of double-stack, intermodal trains. Cambridge Systematics estimates public benefits of over \$6 billion from the project, or a ratio of over 16 to 1 for each public dollar invested.

Estimates from the U.S. Department of Transportation, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and the Congressional Budget Office anticipate a *67 percent growth in freight by 2020*. This will result in additional strain on the nation's transportation infrastructure. The National Gateway will enable the ports of Baltimore, Maryland; Norfolk, Virginia; and Wilmington, North Carolina to efficiently handle this growth in traffic while reducing the volume on already congested roadways like I-95, I-81 and I-70/I-76.

Freight rail is the most environmentally-friendly way to move goods over land and is a critical part of the solution to meeting our nation's transportation needs. However, in order for freight rail to help alleviate current and future challenges with the nation's transportation and freight industries, e.g. capacity constraints, fluctuating fuel costs, crowded highways, and greenhouse gas emissions, we must enhance the national freight rail infrastructure and allow for double-stack container movements.

The National Gateway will provide the following:

- Enhanced Intermodal Service. The National Gateway will provide more competitive intermodal service between East Coast ports and the Midwest. The addition of several new intermodal terminals along the National Gateway route will enhance consumers' options and augment our nation's ability to deliver manufactured goods to world markets by drastically increasing the market access potential. The initiative improves the efficiency of our transportation network and saves over \$2.7 billion in logistics costs.
- New Jobs and Businesses. In the short-term, the National Gateway will create design and construction jobs along the corridor. In the longer-term, it will support thousands of logistics, manufacturing and port-related businesses in our states. Initial estimates for job creation resulting from the double-stack clearances alone exceed 5,000 new jobs in the first ten years. The investment in the intermodal facilities along the route by CSX will create thousands of *additional* jobs relating to the increased freight being shipped, and by the companies that benefit from the improved rail shipping operations.
- Reduction in Traffic Congestion/Emissions. By enhancing efficient freight transportation, the National Gateway will also reduce traffic congestion and lower highway maintenance costs in our states. This project will shift nearly 3 billion truck miles off our nation's highways each year, saving over \$550 million in highway maintenance costs and nearly \$460 million in safety savings.
- Reduction of Transportation Sector Greenhouse Gas Emissions. EPA's most recent data shows that over 25% of emissions come from the transportation sector, which are expected to continue to rise in the years ahead. We share your goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and this project helps in that effort by tackling the challenges of global warming. The National Gateway is estimated to reduce fuel consumption by 250 million gallons. This improved fuel efficiency reduces over 2.7 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> in the first ten years alone.

Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica

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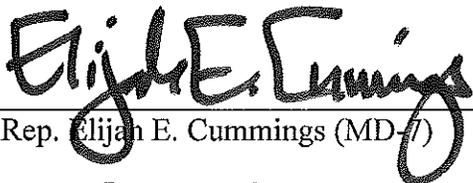
This ambitious public-private partnership calls for over \$700 million in public and private investment across six states and the District of Columbia. CSX Transportation has committed one half (\$387 million) of the total project cost, primarily for the construction of new intermodal terminals along the corridor, and a multi-state effort is being undertaken to secure approximately \$194 million, or 25% of the project cost, in federal transportation funds.

State governments along the route would provide the remaining 25% in matching funds based on their share of the clearance work in their respective states. These double-stack clearance projects include track lowering, bridge raising and bridge replacement. Seven of the bridges to be replaced are on deficient bridge lists. Specific information on each of the clearance projects has been included in the formal project submission to the Committee. Public input opportunities will occur per the provisions of the NEPA process or through other fora as appropriate.

The National Gateway and its double-stack clearance projects will help ensure that East Coast ports are ready for the growth in cargo likely to occur once the Panama Canal is widened in 2015. It will deliver over \$6 billion in public benefits – a 16 to 1 ratio – and will provide greater capacity for product shipments; reduce traffic congestion and carbon emissions and lower highway maintenance costs; and create thousands of jobs that directly or indirectly support the initiative.

We look forward to working with you in the coming weeks and months to secure the federal funding needed to make the National Gateway a reality and advance the Committee's goal to create a more efficient and environmentally-friendly transportation system.

cc: The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Chairman, Subcommittee on Highways and Transit  
The Honorable John Duncan, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Highways and Transit

  
Rep. Elijah E. Cummings (MD-7)

  
Rep. Bill Shuster (PA-9)





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