

February 28, 2014

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
520 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen,

The American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) is pleased to support S. 2063, the "Strengthen and Fortify Existing Bridges Act of 2014" (the SAFE Bridges Act). This proposal would provide needed additional resources to improve the safety and performance of bridges in every state.

ARTBA's analysis of data in U.S. DOT's National Bridge Inventory provides compelling justification for S. 2063. For example: there are over 1.1 billion crossings every day on U.S. bridges that are classified as either structurally deficient or functionally obsolete – a designation that applies to 25 percent of our bridge network. This includes travel by commuters, shoppers, school buses, ambulances and freight trucks. The need for repair on some of these bridges is critical. Bridges that have weight or capacity restrictions because of poor conditions are crossed an average of 90 million times every day. Over 158 million crossings are on bridges where the deck condition has been rated by inspectors as poor, serious, critical or approaching "imminent failure." Fifty eight million crossings occur on bridges where the structural evaluation is rated as "basically intolerable."

Our nation's vast unmet bridge needs are well documented and irrefutable, yet we are not just suffering from a bridge crisis. We need to dramatically upgrade the nation's bridges, roadways and public transportation facilities. The U.S. transportation network is a holistic system and we must address all of these needs in a coherent way.

Unfortunately, federal investment in surface transportation improvements has lurched from one temporary patch to the next since 2008. Until Congress develops a long-term revenue solution for the Highway Trust Fund, credible proposals to improve safety and U.S. economic competitiveness—like the SAFE Bridges Act—will continue to suffer from competition among scarce federal discretionary resources.

ARTBA commends your leadership on this critical national issue and pledges to work with you to ensure all U.S. transportation infrastructure needs are met.

Sincerely,



T. Peter Ruane  
President and CEO